

# IN THESE TIMES



VOL. 5, NO. 9

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75 CENTS

## PLUGGED INTO THE FUTURE

Communications workers confront a fast-changing environment



## ISRAEL: Labor takes a turn



# THE INSIDE STORY



## Jude Wanniski: As good as gold

By John Judis

Jude Wanniski, author of *The Way the World Works*, former editorial page writer for *The Wall Street Journal*, advisor of Ronald Reagan and Jack Kemp, is the leading apologist for supply-side economics. With ally David Stockman as head of the Office of Management and the Budget, Wanniski and the other supply-siders can be expected to continue influencing Reagan.

According to the supply-side theorists, the principal problem facing the U.S. economy is high tax rates, which discourage work and investment. They argue that revenue from the increase in production created by a tax cut will more than make up for any potential revenue lost. The Republicans can therefore have the best of all possible worlds: economic growth and balanced budgets, full employment and price stability.

But as some popular versions of supply-side economics fail to note—for instance, Tom Bethell's recent summary in the *National Review*—additional measures besides a tax cut are required to stem inflation and release private energies. Wanniski, along with economists Arthur Laffer and Robert A. Mundell, also advocates a return to the gold standard.

You warned in a *WALL STREET JOURNAL* article last month that Ronald Reagan was in danger of being "Thatcherized"—forced into unpopular and unproductive austerity measures. Do you still believe that? In the *Wall Street Journal* piece, I said these were all the fears. I said I didn't think it was going to happen. I count on Reagan himself as being a deep-down natural supply-sider, so I still feel we are going to get our policies implemented more or less, sooner or later.

**What are the critical policy choices that are going to tip Reagan in one direction rather than another?**

For one thing, we have the effective date of the tax cut. Would it be retroactive to Jan. 1 or not? Donald Regan, of course, is not a supply-sider. Alan Greenspan and the others had come around to the idea that they should lift the retroactivity of the tax cut. When passed, it would take effect upon the signature of the president.

The reason for this was to put pressure on Congress to accept the spending cuts. This is really a fallback to the old Republican practice of starting the process by throwing the widows and orphans out in the snow.

What was happening was that we went through a period where the Reagan transition economic team was turning itself into the Ford administration or the Carter administration in terms of political strategy.

Now a lot of people were alarmed about this. I said that I didn't think that when Reagan would hear about it, he would like it or approve it and would say that he

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was not going to change the Jan. 1 date. And Reagan has now said he is not going to do that.

The issue is what you do first. Our idea is you get the economy going and then when things are really going well, you begin stripping away budgetary excess. You cut spending in a boom. You put down tough means tests for food stamps when it is obvious people should be ineligible because they are well employed.

We're also concerned about monetary policy. We really do not think we will be able to get the interest rates down and end the inflation and get the 1980s off and away without dollar convertibility or something that comes darn close to it.

Besides the political problems of getting the other countries to agree to a new gold standard, aren't there dangers in going back to gold? Couldn't it create pressures toward a recession?

No, a boom. It would cause a boom because one of the major reasons why the productivity of the country has collapsed is that we don't produce for future consumption anymore. There are two reasons an individual produces—for current consumption and future consumption. You take whatever you produce today—ten loaves of bread. You eat one yourself, take two in taxes, trade six of them for other goods. One loaf you want to save for your old age. You invest it in something that will translate into a financial asset denominated in dollars.

But if you observe that over time the loaf is constantly crumbling away, you don't produce for future consumption.

What we expect would happen if we return to dollar convertibility is that the Dow-Jones industrial average would go to 1,500, and there would be the most vigorous rally in the bond market in the history of the country.

**But couldn't a return to gold convertibility set off a run on the billions of Eurodollars in European banks?**

On no, you would have to set the correct dollar-gold ratio and it would have to be set above the nominal wage-rate. You can't have a dollar-gold ratio that forces individuals to negotiate lower wages in order to fit inside that monetary system.

We've been attempting to use monetary policy—devaluing the currency in order to expand economic activity—and it has been demonstrably a failure.

We've devalued it, and we've impoverished ourselves. We are now producing cheap Japanese-type automobiles, and they are producing Toyotas that are rivalling Cadillacs.

*[Note: There are three problems with Wanniski's proposal for dollar convertibility. One, it would be impossible at this point to get the other major capitalist countries to agree to a new standard, especially one pegged solely to the dollar. Two, if a new standard were set, foreign countries could use the threat of converting their dollars to force the U.S. to impose austerity measures. Three, if a new standard were set high (revaluation), it would cause American goods to be undersold by imports. If it was set low (devaluation), it would make imports—including oil—more expensive and lower the American standard of living. For these reasons, most left, right and center economists reject a return to the gold standard.]*

**There is expected to be at least 5 percent a year real increase in defense spending. Don't these increases, even with supply-side tax cuts, make budget deficits likely?** Well, sure there are going to be deficits for a few years. There would be fewer deficits, and we would eliminate the deficits most rapidly if we were to follow all our policies at once, but there are too many people who are afraid of doing the supply-side bag all at once.

But if we are going to wait around until 1982 or 1983 before we decide to do something seriously about monetary policy, we'll have to have deficits, but the deficits will be better under Reaganite supply-side

policies than without them at all.

**But look over the long run. Doesn't the constant rise in defense expenditures, whatever their justification, work at cross purposes with supply-side tax cuts? Historians have argued, for instance, that the Dutch empire of the 17th century collapsed under the weight of higher taxes imposed to finance its defense. Doesn't the U.S. face the same problem?**

Take the British empire. The British empire projected such economic vitality in the 19th century that the whole world knew the British were capable at a moment's notice of putting together an armada, an army, a navy, everything. As a result, they projected such tremendous power and confidence that there was peace in the world and there were very small amounts of resources in the U.K. going to armaments.

**But could this happen in the U.S.?**

I hope it would happen. This is why we argue for a supply-side foreign policy instead of playing power politics as we have for the last 30 years. Instead of Metternichian power politics, export supply-side ideas. Put economic policy back into the State Department. View our mission globally as one of bringing economic expansion and stability to the Third World.

**You mean a supply-side Alliance for Progress?**

Sure. We advise Third World countries through the International Monetary Fund and World Bank that we'll help them refinance their debt. But instead of asking them to raise taxes, devalue their currency and impose wage-price controls and mind-bending austerity, we advise them to follow supply-side policies—slash their personal income tax rates, tie their currency to the now reconstituted dollar.

**You must have seen figures that show total profits having increased over the last years, but their having been used mainly for services and trade, rather than, say, manufacturing investment.**

Services and trade are OK. What we are unhappy with is seeing people use their mind, their brainpower, spending 90 percent of their time trying to figure out how to save their incomes. Putting money into real estate, putting it into things rather than people. And the supply-side objective is to have human capital increasing in value much more rapidly than physical capital so that individuals will once again invest in each other rather than in gold, in collectibles, in real estate.

**You talk about Keynesianism being bankrupt because it concerns itself with demand rather than supply. Isn't the other side of supply-side economics—the other alternative—some form of government investment planning?**

The reindustrialization idea? That's the elitists solution as opposed to the populist solution. A select group decides. This is central planning in the Kremlin. You deny yourselves the energy and creativity of the masses that would surface if you allowed them all to go for the brass ring. That's where you get excellence.

**But in a supply-side economy, people in corporate boardrooms wield a tremendous amount of power over the economy. What's the difference as far as elitism is concerned with that type of decision-making and government planning?**

I'm not opposed to elitists. You need elitists to run things. I am just opposed to elitists who are screwing up. And they have screwed up over the last 15 or 20 years. We're in terrible shape now because the elites have broken down.

You generally find during such periods of history that the masses will exert themselves. That's when you have the populist movements. And that's what Ronald Reagan is all about—a populist movement that means to get us all back on track and then turn things back to the elites to run.

*Part II of the interview with Stuart Holland that began last week on this page appears on page 18.*

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IN THESE TIMES

# Union takes deepest cut of all

By David Moberg

DETROIT

**I**N THE END, IT WAS THE FEDERAL government and Chrysler corporation united against 100,000 Chrysler workers and their union, threatening elimination of their jobs if the workers didn't take a huge pay cut. In the end, the union gave in, hoping to save the jobs, and in the process salvage a few counter-concessions to ease the pain.

The re-negotiation of the union contract, a result of Chrysler's application for an additional \$400 million of the authorized \$1.5 billion in loan guarantees, saved Chrysler at least \$522 million in worker wages and benefits over the remaining 20 months of the contract. The union estimated that each worker would lose \$10,000. Not only was the cost-of-living adjustment abolished for the remainder of the contract, leaving Chrysler workers open to the continual wage-cutting of inflation, but also workers would lose the \$1.15 COLA "float"—the money so far added to their wages as a result of inflation during the contract plus a nickel from the previous contract—pushing their wages back to the time of the contract opening. That amounts to an 11 percent pay cut, roughly \$46 a week, the union calculates.

The deal was made to avoid bankruptcy, but in everything but the legal form, the negotiations supervised by Treasury Secretary G. William Miller, former chairman of the Textron corporation, amounted to bankruptcy. (Indeed, there is a question of whether formal bankruptcy would have really been worse for workers in the long run.)

As part of the financial reorganization, 125 banks were expected to convert \$500 million in debt and \$68 million in deferred interest to preferred stock, which currently pays no dividends but has long-term value if Chrysler revives, thereby saving the corporation over \$100 million a year in interest payments. Also, Chrysler could pay off the remaining \$500 million in debts at 30 cents on the dollar, effectively canceling \$350 million in debts. Suppliers would also be expected to offer \$36 million in concessions now and a similar amount by the end of the year. If all parties agree to these terms and Congress and the new Loan Board members do not object, Chrysler will get its \$400 million in loan guarantees.

It was a prime example of a kind of managed austerity that emerges as a semblance of government industrial policy. It is a dismal, self-defeating and harsh alternative to simple-minded economic anarchy, what incoming Treasury head Donald Regan alluded to when he suggested *apropos* Chrysler, "Those who live by the sword, and you can finish that statement for yourself." The alternative to both managed austerity and anarchy is a full-employment plan of economic stimulation and planning, coupled with price controls on leading corporations and sectors.

The union did manage to salvage a few small pieces of clothing as it retired from the battlefield, tattered and wounded, its members' promised income transferred back to the corporation with the help of an administration whose macro-economic policies had already contributed to the squeeze on Chrysler and its employees. The UAW rebuffed Miller's insistence on a rollback of pension improvements (\$15 per month for a 30-year retiree) that had already taken effect and of rollback of hearing and vision benefits. Also, workers will get their first quarter cost-of-living payment for this year. Those changes reduced the \$673 million Miller had been insisting on as a minimal concession.

Partly under pressure from the union, the package also includes \$161 million in management pay cuts and an agree-



Steve Kogan

ment that managerial reductions will be roughly in proportion to any union layoffs. The union also won a profit-sharing plan that will distribute preferred stock to members, originally intended as a way of trying to regain some of what was lost in wages. Also, the company agreed not to close any of the five plants that were scheduled for closing this year. There was also an agreement, as described by a union spokesman, for worker participation in corporate decision-making at all levels, including decisions on products and processes as well as on-the-line work issues.

In addition to the wage cut and elimination of COLA, the workers lose additional pension benefits and the annual improvement factor—wage increases that reflect productivity growth.

## "Me too," from Ford and GM.

Ford, which has been falling as fast as Chrysler (from 22.7 percent of the domestic market in 1978 to 16.5 percent in 1980), but has farther to go, and General Motors, which is strong despite a big third-quarter loss, have both announced that they will expect their own concessions from the UAW at the next contract, if not before. By that time there will be several dollars an hour separating

people wanting to specify that the cost-of-living protection not be tampered with, whatever else was given up. "The vast majority of members—probably 80 to 85 percent—feel they could give up pay raises, pensions and benefits as long as COLA continues, so they can keep up a bit," Charles Britnell, president of the Chrysler local at Belvidere, Ill., said. "Most say, 'Just don't mess with the cost-of-living.'"

Miller had clearly seen the Loan Board negotiations as, in the words of a *Chicago Tribune* report, "a positive means by which bloated wages in the automobile industry can be reduced." The settlement also is a major opening salvo in the attack on union cost-of-living protection that can be expected to intensify in other industries, so that workers who now have some protection against inflation will be forced to share in the 10 percent cut in real buying power suffered by the average manufacturing worker over the past two years, or more likely even greater reductions.

Weakening the auto workers' contract has an impact far beyond that industry, since the union has long been a wage leader and innovator whose contracts, along with a few others, effectively set an upper limit to industrial workers' ex-

got only 7 percent of an \$85 million car market. Chrysler's goal is theoretically possible: the market may reach 9.6 million (but the pick-up will probably not come until late in the year); and Chrysler has been able to improve its sales now that it has offered interest rate rebates, shifted to more spartan and low-priced models that aren't overloaded with options (which hurt sales in the fall of its K-cars) and held the line during recent GM and Ford price increases. But its successful marketing strategy also trims profits.

Now with financial assistance far greater than it expected—worth \$2 billion, according to Iacocca—Chrysler is in a far better position to pursue not just that marketing strategy but also the long-term course that is virtually inevitable and was pushed by Miller—merger, or some kind of joint operations, with a strong partner.

Such combinations are increasingly common as the world auto industry shakes out. Late last year Renault took over American Motors. Recently Nissan and Alfa Romeo agreed to build small cars in Italy; British Leyland and Honda will build a car for Europe in Britain; Renault and Volvo formed a subsidiary to make Volvos; Fiat and Peugeot agreed to build engines together; Saab-Scandia

## This settlement is the opening salvo of a broad attack on labor's cost-of-living protections.



Chrysler from Ford and GM workers. Miller also exacted promises from the UAW not to press hard on Chrysler in 1982 as part of the package. That not only guarantees no return to pay parity—which had originally made a weaker contract palatable to Chrysler workers—but also virtually guarantees efforts to roll back benefits at the other auto companies. The UAW hoped that the counter-concessions it won from Chrysler would make the other companies think twice about pressing their demands.

It is clear that the new contract will not sit well with Chrysler workers, especially the loss of COLA and the wage cuts. In rejecting Chrysler's original ultimatum of a wage freeze but agreeing to reopen negotiations, the Chrysler bargaining council was torn, with many

expectations. Chrysler's market failings, the result of its management mistakes, government policies to slow down the economy, the jump in oil prices and aggressive penetration by a low-wage Japanese industry, is thus reinforced by government policies and the threat of massive unemployment to drive down wages of all workers and redistribute income toward capital.

## Looking for a partner.

Chrysler had claimed that it could make it on its own with its original financial plan and the loan guarantees if it could get 9 percent of a domestic market of 9.6 million cars sold next year. This past year—the worst year for U.S. manufacturers since 1961, with a total U.S. production of 6.58 million cars—Chrysler

and Lancia will jointly build mid-size cars; and Nissan and VW as well as Ford and Toyota are discussing joint ventures.

Although Mitsubishi and Peugeot are the immediately likely partners for Chrysler, since Chrysler owns 15 percent of each and markets some Mitsubishi cars in the U.S., Peugeot has been weak and Mitsubishi stand-offish. With the new package, attitudes may change. Chrysler's likely merger simply reflects a reorganization of the world auto industry affecting nearly every company and country.

Indeed, for all of the righteous indignation about "bloated" U.S. auto worker wages, which are roughly \$9.50 an hour compared to the manufacturing average of \$7.10, a case can be made that

*Continued on page 10*



# IN SHORT

## With aid like that...

As we go to press, the Carter administration is reportedly ready to resume fiscal year 1981's appropriation of \$5 million in military aid to the government of El Salvador. But the U.S. may have to ship the war equipment by air rather than boat because the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union is refusing to handle any Salvador-bound military shipments.

The union called a boycott Dec. 22, after the murder of four American religious workers in El Salvador prompted the U.S. to cut off aid. "We do not invoke this boycott weapon lightly," ILWU president Jim Herman said at a press conference in San Francisco. "We have made a thorough investigation of the situation in El Salvador and find ourselves driven to such action as the only reasonable and humane alternative." A wide range of groups, from the Congressional Black Caucus to the International Association of Machinists to the Maryknoll order of the Catholic Church, has expressed support for the ILWU action.

Immediately after the press conference, according to *The Dispatcher* (the union paper), at least one "substantial shipment" of military goods on a Bay-area pier "was taken off the dock...and hauled over to the Oakland army base for storage."

## Cause for alarm

In its latest issue, the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* has pushed the hands of its symbolic clock forward, from seven minutes before to four before midnight—which marks the outbreak of nuclear war. "The time change really has nothing to do with Reagan," insisted editor Ruth Adams. "It has to do with what happened in 1980: the official declaration from both the Soviet Union and the U.S. that nuclear war was now thinkable, and both nations' refusing to pledge that they will not be the first to use nuclear weapons. These two events, combined with the deployment of new missiles in Europe and the U.S., brought us closer to nuclear disaster, and consequently we're moving the hands."

## So forget the sprays

At a conference on the medical consequences of nuclear war, reports a magazine called *The Sciences*, scientists estimated that a modest one-megaton nuclear bomb, if exploded over New York City, would probably kill 2.25 million people immediately, seriously injure another 3.6 million and give third-degree burns to a person standing eight miles away.

But cockroaches, which evolved more than 300 million years ago, would suffer nothing more serious than blindness and would go on reproducing normally.

## The Ploughshares Nine

The Groton, Conn., ship-building plant of Electric Boat (a division of General Dynamics) was a scene of considerable decorum as dignitaries joined thousands of employees to dedicate the U.S.S. *Baltimore*, a nuclear-powered submarine. But then, as Maryland Senator Charles Mathias and Secretary of the Navy W. Graham Clayton Jr. smashed champagne bottles against the *Baltimore*, a 33-year-old Catholic activist from Baltimore named Peter Demott jumped into a company truck, started it up with keys that had been left in the ignition and rammed the vehicle five times into the rudder of a Trident nuclear submarine under construction nearby. Police finally nabbed Demott, reports Joel Schechter, but only after extensive damage had been done.

Now charged with larceny, trespass and criminal mischief, Demott has been associated with "The Ploughshares Eight," a group including Phillip Berrigan that was arrested after entering a General Electric plant and hammering nuclear weapons parts ("swords") into "ploughshares."

## Get well, Comrade Kate

Kate Ellis, a columnist for *In These Times* and a member of our New York bureau, was shot through the lung during a mugging on Dec. 21. Now at home recovering from surgery, Kate is planning to write up the incident in a future column, but she did offer a mild complaint about existing "get-well" genres.

"I have a huge, huge pile," she said, "of rather creepy cards saying, 'Sorry to hear of your illness—hope you'll be better soon,' which is the serious genre. Then there's the humorous genre, which says, 'Hope you'll bounce back' and has a picture of a Woody Woodpecker-type character hopping around the card in a cute way. But no one has really developed a nice sort of 'get-well' card for us left intellectuals."

—Josh Kornbluth



John Hoagland, who took this photo of a Salvadoran guerrilla, was injured Jan. 12—the second day of the "final offensive" launched by El Salvador's opposition front—when a land mine exploded under his car. A South African journalist, Ian Mates, was killed in the blast, and New York photographer Susan Meiselas was also hurt. Hoagland covered the 1979 revolution in Nicaragua for *IN THESE TIMES*.

## Concerned about 'morale,' Navy expels gay sailor

Danny Sain left a Chicago-area naval base for California early this month, taking with him four complete U.S. Navy uniforms that he hopes to wear again some day. The black sailor was discharged from Great Lakes Naval Training Center in North Chicago for performing homosexual acts. He received the word from the Secretary of the Navy on Jan. 2.

The discharge—honorable—was not unexpected. An on-base review board had recommended it last fall. The members were following Navy policy, which states that persons who perform homosexual acts shall be "separated from the service," adding that "the presence of such a member in a military environment seriously impairs combat readiness, efficiency, security and morale."

Sain, 22, had vowed from the beginning to fight a discharge up to the U.S. Supreme Court. In California, he hopes to make enough money for lawyers' fees while finishing work on a college degree. "All I want to do now is fight them," he said before he left Chicago.

Sain's lawyer, Joseph Schuman, says that the primary ground for filing suit in federal court is the contention that homosexual tendencies are not related to performance of duty. Also, Schuman says, Sain was denied his constitutional rights when Schuman was not supplied with procedural documents he was entitled to receive from the Navy.

Schuman plans to file suit in the spring after talking strategy with other gay-rights lawyers.

Sain joined the Navy in October 1978. After a brief marriage ended in separation last December, he says, he lived in the barracks without mishap, adding that during basic training in San Diego and at Great Lakes, his sexual activity was carried out entirely off-base.

Sain's record is excellent, his officers told a local administrative review board. (He was once runner-

up for the base's "Sailor of the Quarter" honor and was due for a promotion to petty officer 3rd class Jan. 16.) They also testified that his sexual habits would not interfere with future work in a "closed environment." Supportive testimony came even from a born-again Christian who directs the clinic Sain works in as a dental technician.

The Navy is not eager to talk about its policies concerning homosexual conduct. Navy spokesperson Lt. Kenneth Satterfield at the Pentagon would not elaborate on the rules, calling them "self-explanatory." But another military source claimed that a homosexual in a unit could cause the whole outfit to be labeled as such, and would create disruption comparable to that caused by a thief or drunk.

Other rationales are that gays are security risks because they may divulge secret information to keep other persons from revealing that they are homosexuals. "That doesn't work for openly gay persons," attorney Schuman observes.

There is no clear-cut court decision on gays in the military, a legal situation that has created "chaos and frustration," says Roz Richter, executive director of the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund in New York City—a gay advocacy group.

There have been two favorable decisions in U.S. district courts, including a September 1980 ruling to reinstate Leonard Matlovich, a former U.S. Air Force sergeant. He settled, instead, for \$160,000 in back pay and damages.

But in a seemingly conflicting ruling, the 9th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled in October that the Navy had the right to discharge two gay men and a lesbian.

The San Francisco decision has delayed the appeal of two women disciplined for homosexual acts in the widely-publicized U.S.S. *Nor-*

ton Sound case in Long Beach, Calif. Lawyers are now trying to have the appeal heard outside the 9th circuit.

"The prognosis is not good in the high court," Richter said. "We have a very conservative court. Going to the Supreme Court may definitely solve the issue"—to the detriment of homosexuals in the military.

—Sandi Wisenberg

## Giese still in jail for skimming

According to his attorney, Frank Giese is the only person being penalized at this late date for activities during the Vietnam war. Now 65 years old, Giese taught French (before being fired because of his case) at Oregon's Portland State University and ran a leftist bookstore collective. Before his conviction in 1974 and while free throughout six grueling years of appeals, his legal record was unblemished.

Giese and four co-defendants were tried in federal court for activities that included bombings of two recruitment centers. The jury acquitted Giese of the bombings, but convicted him of conspiring against the government.

The appeals process became a nightmare of delays and frustrations. The Ninth Circuit Court finally affirmed Giese's conviction in a heated 2-1 split decision. At one point, the majority withdrew and rewrote its opinion, in part because of Judge Shirley Hufstедler's strong dissent.

In spite of amicus briefs before the U.S. Supreme Court—one submitted by the American Civil Liberties Union and one by three groups representing writers, booksellers and libraries—the high court refused, in December 1979, to hear the arguments.

In March 1980, Frank Giese entered a federal prison. The U.S. Parole Commission recently turned down his appeal of a surprisingly harsh sentence by his parole board. Because his two-year term requires no minimum time served, the commission could have released him at any time.

The two witnesses who testified against Giese were so thoroughly discredited that their testimony is not at issue. The sole physical evidence against Giese was a book, *From the Movement Toward Revolution*, found in a co-defendant's apartment. His fingerprints on four of the pages were used to prove that Giese had read the book. The prosecutor made Giese read inflammatory passages from the witness stand and later argued that his reading the book meant that Giese agreed with and had acted upon the ideas advocated in it.

Giese says that though he owned a copy of *Revolution* and read "snatches" of it, he decided against carrying it in the store because it ended with "some pretty heavy rhetoric."

Nat Hentoff, reacting to the Supreme Court denial, wrote a *Village Voice* article bristling with warnings urging care in reading and lending books. And in its discussion of the case, the *Harvard Law Review* noted the danger of a jury giving undue weight to reading unorthodox books and said that when a conviction rests on such improper evidence, the government has punished indirectly what it could not have punished directly.

—Nancy Fallor



# IN THE NATION

## SURVEILLANCE



Irwin Bock (left), pictured here with the commander of the Chicago red squad, Joseph Grubisic, infiltrated the Chicago Peace Council and served as its delegate to the National Mobilization to End the War.

# Courts curtail some actions of police intelligence units

By Allan Adler  
and Jay Peterzell

WASHINGTON

ON DEC. 30, THE NEW YORK City police department agreed to conduct all future surveillance of political activists under guidelines intended to protect citizens' First Amendment rights. The agreement, reached in settling a nine-year-old court case against the department, is the latest of several attempts by cities and states to regulate the activities of police intelligence units, or "red squads."

These intelligence divisions were set up in many U.S. police departments during the '50s to monitor left groups, and their attentions later turned to the civil rights, anti-war and other protest movements. By the early '70s, red squads around the country were being criticized—and sued—for spying on a wide range of lawful political activity.

The New York suit—a class action filed in 1971 by members of various peace and black activist organizations—charged that undercover police officers and informers had infiltrated law-abiding political groups, reported on their activities, intimidated their members, and tried, sometimes successfully, to persuade members of the groups to engage in illegal activities. The suit also alleged that the New York police department used wiretaps and other illegal techniques to obtain political information unrelated to its law enforcement duties—and that the information thus obtained was improperly provided to other government agencies, prospective employers, and even academic officials.

Under the terms of the court settlement, the Public Security Section (PSS) of the New York Police Intelligence Division is required to "conform to constitutionally guaranteed rights and privileges." The PSS may investigate only persons or groups that threaten or are suspected to be engaged in criminal activity. It may also collect carefully limited types of information about planned

demonstrations. The city's police commissioner, Robert J. McGuire, said in a prepared statement that the new guidelines "represent an enlightened approach to balancing the rights of political activists and the police responsibility for maintaining public order and investigating crime" and would not impair the department's law-enforcement functions.

The settlement also establishes a three-member board, composed of two deputy police commissioners and a civilian to be

appointed by Mayor Koch, to oversee PSS activities. The board will be responsible for extending or terminating investigations, approving the use of informants and infiltration, and ensuring that information maintained in PSS files is in compliance with the guidelines.

Finally, the settlement requires the police department to release some 300,000 pages of intelligence files, dating back to 1955. Members of the public or political organizations who believe their names

may appear in the files (dossiers were reportedly kept on 250,000 people) must make a written request to the department by January 1982. (Requests for files dated 1955-59 must be made by July 1981.) After that, the department may destroy the files.

### A string of settlements.

Political spying by other state and city police departments similarly has been curbed by legislation or court order.

Days before the New York settlement was reached, the State of Michigan announced that the state police department was ready to release nearly half-a-million pages of political surveillance information concerning some 38,000 state residents. (*In These Times*, Dec. 10, 1980.) Four years earlier, in two separate suits, the Michigan statutes authorizing a "red squad" to conduct political intelligence investigations were declared unconstitutional.

The City of Detroit, which had compiled files on more than 100,000 residents between the 1930s and 1970s, also recently lost a constitutional challenge concerning the intelligence activities of its police force. It is preparing to release its files in May.

Lawsuits filed in the early '70s against police departments in Washington, D.C., and Chicago continue to deal on over the issues of how to control political investigations and the fate of the thousands of files on law-abiding groups and activists. Negotiations to settle the Chicago suit collapsed recently, and both it and the Washington case are expected to go to trial.

Civil rights groups in Washington are also circulating a draft statute to prohibit police spying in that city. The draft is modeled on a 1979 Seattle ordinance that prohibits investigations based on political beliefs and places controls on the use of private information obtained in the course of authorized criminal investigations.

The Seattle ordinance, in turn, was partly based on a 1978 court-ordered settlement in Memphis, Tenn.—the first local order to prohibit political spying. That settlement barred the city of Memphis from maintaining any unit "for the purpose of engaging in political intelligence" and from infiltrating political groups.

But police spying has not ended. Just in the past two years a series of suits protesting surveillance and infiltration has been filed by civil liberties organizations in Los Angeles.

Allan Adler and Jay Peterzell are on the staff of the Center for National Security Studies in Washington, D.C.



FIT1

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## NUCLEAR POWER



NRC decommissioning task force head Carl Feldman says the technology exists but worries about the competence to carry it out safely.

## What do you do with a dead nuke?

By J.A. Savage

ARCATA, CALIF.

**A** FEW ABORTED NUCLEAR reactors now litter the nation with potentially dangerous radioactive carcasses. And more dead reactors are assured in the future. Spent nuclear power plants, reprocessing plants and submarine engines all need to be "decommissioned" to insure the health and safety of nearby communities. Yet decommissioning is both a formidable technological challenge and a thorny financial problem.

"Until very recently, not much thought had been given to decommissioning," said Carl Feldman, decommissioning task force leader at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. "It was always thought that the utilities would be around to do it."

Decommissioning dead nuclear power plants will take a lot of money, a lot of technology and a lot of faith, according to the participants in the Second Humboldt Bay Decommissioning Conference held in mid-January in Arcata, a remote northern California college town. Arcata is next to the Humboldt Bay Nuclear Power Plant, the first commercial reactor slated for decommissioning.

Humboldt was shut down in 1976 due to seismic hazards. It has been idle for five years while its owners, Pacific Gas and Electric, spent more than five times its original cost to retrofit the plant so that it can withstand earthquakes. Then

on Christmas 1980—a month after a 7.0 Richter earthquake hit 30 miles from the reactor building—PG&E withdrew its application to reopen the plant. This left Humboldt as the prime candidate for the country's first commercial-sized decommissioning experiment.

### The state of the art.

The only nuclear plants to be decommissioned so far have been small experimental reactors with very short lifespans. Two reactors have been fully decommissioned, or "dismantled," according to the NRC-preferred burial plan.

The first was the Elk River reactor in Minnesota. There, equipment had to be invented to cut the lead-and-concrete

containment vessel into small pieces. The pieces were encased in concrete and buried underground. Dismantling Elk River in 1974 provided the first insights into the costs and technical difficulties of decommissioning. Though the plant only ran at full power for two years, its inner parts "looked pretty cruddy," according to Battelle Pacific decommissioning project director, Dick Smith.

And when decommissioned, Elk River created more radioactive waste than it began with. "It's the 'Midas touch' in reverse," said Dale Bridenbaugh, a consultant at the Three Mile Island clean-up effort. "Every time you clean something it generates more waste." Bridenbaugh explained that when a radioactive surface is washed, the water is contaminated and becomes a low-level waste—so does any other substance used in clean-up.

But despite the fact that technology for waste storage and dismantling is limited to small experimental plants, Smith was reassuring. "The same technology is used no matter how big the plant is." Smith, who has worked at the Hanford, Washington radioactive dump site for 24 years, said that a nuclear reactor is safer to dismantle than a chemical waste dump because "radioactivity is easy to find."

Smith and Feldman, as engineers, agreed that decommissioning technology is available now. But they also agreed that the competence may not exist to carry it out safely.

Ralph Nader, whose intricate activist network has begun to work on the decommissioning issue, scoffed at the NRC's confidence in decommissioning technology. He pointed out that the federal

been warned about the cost of decommissioning, and it's the public that will be, in all probability, saddled with its cost. As immediately as decommissioning looms, Nader said that the utilities can't begin to guess what the expense will be. "The utilities are pretty good down to the fourth decimal when it comes to consumers' bills," Nader charged, "but they can't get a handle on decommissioning costs."

The handle that the utilities do have isn't very exact, but it is enormous. The federal government estimates the decommissioning pricetag, on average, at \$100 million per reactor. Multiplied by 74 licensed reactors, that's a huge amount of money. And the \$100 million is simply an informed guess; the NRC admits that most nuclear cost estimates can be off by a factor of two.

Just who will pay the decommissioning bill remains unclear. Few state public utility commissions have developed any financial prescriptions for the decommissioning headache.

"It used to be that when a utility got a license for a nuclear plant it was assumed that if they had enough money to build it, and enough money to operate it, that they surely would have enough money to terminate it," explained Vince Schwent, nuclear economist for the California Energy Commission. But the TMI accident revealed the faulty logic of that assumption: public utilities may not be financially solvent forever. Schwent said, "The cost of decommissioning Humboldt won't put PG&E out of business, but the cost of TMI may bankrupt its owner, General Public Utilities."

If GPU or any other utility goes bank-

**The problem of reactor cleanup is the "Midas touch in reverse"—every material used in the process also becomes radioactive waste.**



Ralph Nader questions government claims.

rupt, "state government may find itself with a very unpleasant problem on its hands," said the nuclear advisor to the governor of California.

And it appears that consumers will be asked to pay no matter what is decided. "If consumer liability is limited, it will end up costing the utilities more to finance their borrowing money from other sources. Then, they will turn to the PUC, say that the cost of capital has risen and demand a rate increase from the consumer to cover it," explained Schwent.

Regulation of the physical process of decommissioning will be addressed in a generic Environmental Impact Statement on decommissioning due from the NRC in February. From the final EIS, the federal government will begin to draft decommissioning policy.

But the states are in no such bureaucratic rush to address the issue of financial responsibility for decommissioning. Here, the Humboldt plant may set an economic precedent for the nation.

Nader pointed out that decommissioning is only a point on the nuclear continuum. He said that after the economics and technology of decommissioning nuclear plants begin to be understood, "it is the beginning of a whole new series of problems for the surrounding community and the workers involved."

J.A. Savage, a California writer, helped initiate the Humboldt Bay Decommissioning conferences.

### Who will pay?

Nader questioned not only decommissioning engineering, but also decommissioning ethics. The public has not yet

## It's time to talk about the options

Decommissioning policy is still in its infancy. There are many choices to be made by the public, the government and the utilities over how it will be handled.

The first choices concern the technical methods of decommissioning and the financial arrangements to pay for it.

### Methods.

**Decontamination.** The immediate removal of all radioactive materials down

to levels that are considered acceptable to permit the property to be released for unrestricted use. This is now the NRC-preferred method.

**Entombment.** A method of encasing the entire facility in concrete. This is to insure that the plant isn't disturbed until the radioactive material decays to a level acceptable for releasing it for unrestricted use.

**SAFESTOR.** The plant is locked up and guarded. SAFESTOR implies that there will be a subsequent decontamination of the plant. The utilities have preferred SAFESTOR and entombment methods because they are cheaper in the short run.

### Economics.

**Negative Salvage Value.** This would allow depreciation money to be collected as if there were a value on the salvage quality of the nuclear equipment.

**Prepayment.** A prepaid fund collected prior to facility start-up would be segregated from other company assets. But the burden would rest on the ratepayers.

**Sinking Fund.** Money would be set aside at regular intervals for a prescribed amount of time—the amount subject to revision. At the end of the plant's productive life, the money collected, plus interest, would cover decommissioning costs.



# The Peres difference is slight

By David Mandel

JERUSALEM

**F**OUR YEARS AGO, THEN PRIME minister Yitzhak Rabin narrowly survived a challenge to his leadership of Israel's Labor Party by Shimon Peres—a protégé of Moshe Dayan widely regarded as an opportunist and a hawk. A few months later, Peres won the position by default after Rabin's illegal American bank account was exposed, but then Labor lost the election.

Today, a "new Peres" seems intent on selling used merchandise to the Israeli public, and current indications are that he is succeeding. Most helpful has been the Likud government—bickering, demoralized and beset by its own scandals—not to mention an economic situation much worse than anyone ever dreamed of under Labor. But Peres, the reborn socialist (he renounced the label 10 years ago), has already been given credit, at least among party stalwarts, for Labor's anticipated comeback.

Late last month, Peres beat back a Rabin challenge at the Labor convention by 71 to 29 percent. And this time, though Peres is certainly no extreme dove, Rabin sounded the more hawkish of the two.

Peres has been firmly in command of the party apparatus since he won a vote of confidence in the central committee last spring against a previous challenger, the late Yigal Allon. Rabin, urged to run by some of Allon's closest comrades in the kibbutz movement, was hoping to pick up the backing of party traditionalists still suspicious of Peres' sojourn during the 1960s in the splinter group led by David Ben-Gurion and Moshe Dayan.

Also adding interest to the race were the surprising results of public opinion polls indicating that Rabin was far more popular than Peres. Apparently, the former premier's well cultivated "elder statesman" image offset the damage done by his memoirs published last winter, which contained below-the-belt personal attacks against Peres.

But observers trying to anticipate what Labor's policies will be if—as seems likely—the party returns to power, find few answers in the Peres-Rabin rivalry. The winner enjoyed solid support from all ideological shades in the party, including such important doves as Abba Eban and Yossi Sarid. Some of these doves claimed that the historically more hard-line Peres has changed—in the Rabin government he was known for cultivating Gush Emunim ultra-rightists to annoy the prime minister—or that the times have changed and that Peres' pragmatism will make him more flexible. Dovish Rabin-backers retorted that this was not true, and accused Eban, for instance, who never got along with their man, of going with the apparent winner in hopes of regaining his job as foreign minister.

Traditional loyalists to Allon—and by default Rabin—included some of the elements with a clear interest in hawkish positions: agricultural settlement movements whose members were planted by Labor on the Golan Heights, West Bank and northern Sinai. Under pressure from the Sinai settlements, Allon called on the party to refuse to support the Camp David agreements in 1978. Rabin and Peres both voted with Allon at the time in an effort to outflank Begin from the right.

Despite Rabin's move to the right, the most abrasive development in the rivalry was the creation of a semi-secret pro-Rabin faction in the party, the "Urim Group." Some of its organizers were individuals who abandoned Labor for parties further to the left in 1977, partly out

of personal distaste for Peres. Their activities diminished as the convention approached, but several months before, they spurred the formation of semi-independent pro-Peres groups. A war of newspaper ads ensued, contributing absolutely nothing to clarification of the issue and undercutting any possibility of a reconciliation.

But Peres' decisive win left the party united despite itself, and barring a reorganization of Israel's center-right around popular figures like Ezer Weizman and Moshe Dayan or a suspension of the democratic-electoral process, Labor looks reasonably sure of forming the next government, perhaps even with an absolute majority for the first time ever. So it is worth trying to anticipate what

## Labor Party policy from 1967 to 1977 was based on avoidance—no drawing of maps, no definition of "secure borders."

its policies might be, especially since Egypt, the U.S. and perhaps Jordan seem to be waiting openly, counting on greater progress towards an autonomy agreement with Peres at Israel's helm.

### A matter of degrees.

First of all, Labor is united in generally favoring the Camp David process and its pro-U.S. orientation. There is virtually no difference between it and the Likud over the conception of Israel as loyal servant of American interests, although a few isolated voices—notably Professor Shlomo Avineri, a former foreign ministry director-general under Yigal Allon—have recently called for a reassessment of Israel's extreme anti-Sovietism.

Nor can a sharp left turn be expected economically. There will be a return to welfare-state capitalism, perhaps more efficient and less corrupt than before, following the harsh electoral lesson of 1977. But the Likud has not really changed all that much; its more serious difficulties with stagnation are partly a function of the world crisis, and partly a result of clumsy attempts, already being rescinded, to implement a Milton Friedmanist policy. Yet the Histadrut workers organization, controlled by the Labor Party, has been amazingly quiescent as real wages nosedive. Cynics have concluded that the Labor leaders are afraid to raise expectations too high for their return to power.

On the Arab-Israeli conflict—lest expectations here run too high—it must be recalled that Israel's "three nos"—no withdrawal to the 1967 lines, no negotiating with the PLO and no Palestinian state between Jordan and Israel—became fossilized during the Golda Meir and Rabin eras. Labor itself approved the founding of Kiryat Arba alongside Hebron, dozens of settlements in the Golan Heights, the Jordan Valley, the Etzion Bloc and the Gaza Strip, plus a few in the heart of the West Bank. Under Labor, East Jerusalem was annexed and ringed with Jewish suburbs. None of these acts has been renounced.

True, Galili was dropped from the 1977 Knesset list, and has been in the wilderness most of the time since then.

But the veteran kibbutz movement leader made a flying comeback in July, when he was elected by an overwhelming majority to head Labor's pre-convention platform committee on foreign affairs and defense.

Party youth branch (under 35) head Haim Ramon admits that his "extreme" (by Labor standards) dovish line is weak in the party. Therefore, he explains, the "moderates'" strategy in the committee's platform debate was to try and prevent negative formulations that would tie the leaders' hands after a return to power. There was no absolute refusal to return certain territories, for instance, but a declaration that Labor does not want to maintain rule over a million Arabs against their will. Ramon claims that under this principle, a large majority of the party would favor returning at least 80 percent of the West Bank to Jordan.

The platform proposal put forth by Galili's committee did not spell out Labor's ideas on future borders. It was non-committal enough to be passed nearly unanimously—Ramon could be satisfied, and Galili could still insist that "the platform is meant to refute the Likud's false assertion that the Labor Alignment...would

demand for a separate West Bank state."

Perhaps. But Ramon, here echoing Abba Eban, does not rule out the "Palestinian option" either. He accuses the PLO of having no interest in talks with Israel, "but we should state our willingness to negotiate with any Palestinian organization that expresses a desire to sit down and discuss peace with Israel."

Peres, meanwhile, has come to accept the 1974 "Yariv" formula, which made such an overture contingent on demands for "recognition and cessation of terror," and the party convention adopted it (though with a proviso specifically ruling out talks with the PLO). The doves point to this development as evidence of movement away from the hawkish strait-jacket, even if, for many Laborites, the formulation is more of a public relations ploy to put the onus of deadlock on the other side than a serious feeler towards the Palestinian people.

Before 1977, it would have been impossible for a Labor party "think tank" to come out with explicit proposals on Arab flags in East Jerusalem, dismantling West Bank settlements and handing most of the area to King Hussein in an "interim agreement." But these ideas, although not adopted, were submitted to the platform committee before the convention. They were, however, widely criticized, even by Young Guard leader Ramon, who quoted Peres' response: "Why should we negotiate with ourselves before even sitting down with Jordan or anyone else?"

The question contained a hint of the avoidance syndrome that characterized Labor policy from 1967 to 1977. No drawing of maps, no spelling out exactly what "territorial compromise" would mean, no definition of "secure borders." The tactic served as a smokescreen for the hawks, who ploddingly but consis-



Shimon Peres

"guide the ship of state weak-kneed back to the June 4, 1967, lines."

One new formulation unveiled by the Galili committee was the term "Jordanian-Palestinian state" to which Israel should return part of the West Bank. It is a significant semantic change from the days of Golda ("there are no Palestinians") Meir. But even dove Ramon echoes the views of party leader Peres (whom he supported against Rabin) in favoring the "Jordanian option" to an overture towards the Palestinians. "Jordan is already a Palestinian state except for its king," whom Ramon, perhaps unlike Peres, expects to see overthrown at some point. He opines: "If the PLO were running Jordan today, you wouldn't hear a

tently "created facts" and regularly pooh-poohed overtures from King Hussein, probably a lot more willing to compromise than he is now.

The minimalists in Labor, now bolder than before, do not ignore the fact that the hawks are still around, and likely to gain influence if prime minister Begin adopts, as expected, a campaign tactic of taunting Labor's alleged willingness to "give up the heart of the Land of Israel to a PLO state." The Labor hawks will instinctively deny any such thing. But the doves hope that at least that other troubling species of fowl in the party, the ostriches who used to stick their heads in the ground and hope for the best, are nearing extinction. ■



## INDIA

## A violent but stable culture

By Fred Halliday

NEW DELHI

**I**F THE OBJECTIVE MISERY OF THE masses was itself enough to provoke a social revolution, then India would be the first candidate for such an upheaval. The degradation of the great majority of the population—40 percent of whom live around the poverty line and another 40 percent below it—hits one in almost every corner of this vast land.

In the cities there are the lines of huddled forms sleeping amid the filth and pollution in the streets, under bridges, on railway platforms and in open spaces. Lepers beg miserably from the passers-by—85,000 of them in the city of Bombay alone and increasing there at the rate of 4,000 a year. Outcasts from their own families, some of the lepers walk the streets in organized groups with hats marked "heip."

In the meager mudhuts and brackish slums where many millions of peasants have come to escape the even greater misery of the villages they live surrounded by pools of stagnant water and piles of garbage. Compounding the chaos of urban traffic conditions are not only the cows and horse-drawn *tongas* or carriages of an older India, but also the muscle-strained men who for a few *pais* cycle people about in their rickshaws and dutifully push them up hills as the passengers sit complacently in the back.

The briefest trip to the countryside reveals even greater poverty. Men till the earth with wooden ploughs that have been the same for centuries. Children play naked in fly-infested back yards. Vultures peck at the carcasses of dead animals. *Untouchable* women squat by the side of the road making fuel patties out of the excrement, animal and human, that they have scraped up from the roads. In the villages of Rajasthan, near the tourist centers, there is an air of prosperity; yet in the same province famine rages.

Yet India's 33-year record since independence has another side—a spectacular example of the combination of growth and misery inherent in capitalist development. Virtually alone among Third World countries it has preserved a substantial degree of bourgeois democracy: governments are thrown out in elections in which up to half the population votes. The press, although somewhat muffled, is as free as that in Greece or Mexico. There is in some provinces a powerful trades union movement that mobilizes millions in its struggles, part of the purposive resistance that so belies the image of fatalism and otherworldliness that soul-tired westerners try to project onto India. The courts are alive with the battles of advocates pleading the cases of women and workers alike.

Economically, too, India's is a striking tale. While famine does continue, this is a problem of distribution, not production: India now has a regular surplus in food grains. India is the tenth largest industrial power in the world,



Though famine continues, India now has a regular surplus of grains.

and over half its exports are manufactured goods. In its cities the frenzy of capitalist enterprise can be seen in every corner: in the acres of shops that make up Chandni Chowk, Delhi's market and the largest in Asia, and in the factories that crowd the outskirts of Bombay.

Perhaps India's most striking achievement is that it has, so far, preserved its unity. This is in part because India has such a strong bourgeoisie that has built up a powerful administrative and economic system in the post-independence period. Fostered under the period of British rule, this ruling class recruited widely in the ensuing years, drawing in the prosperous farmers who have benefited from the Green Revolution, the expanding business class, and the members of the vast bureaucracy.

This bourgeoisie has its national institutions, its national market and its national language—English, which, in a somewhat Hindified form, is spoken much more widely than during the colonial days. The bourgeoisie's political instrument was the Congress Party, the nationalist force that dominated the independence struggle and that ruled without interruption until Mrs. Gandhi was

ejected in the elections of 1977.

Mrs. Gandhi was voted back into office in 1979, but the old Congress machine seems not to have broken down. She herself has lost authority in the party to a younger generation of local bosses, and she was deeply affected when Sanjay, her second son and closest adviser, was killed in a plane crash last year. She is believed to be in mediocre health, and all too willing—as are most people in Indian public life—to rely upon the advice of astrologers before making important decisions.

With unrest growing in the provinces, increasingly brazen corruption in politics and the civil service, economic growth stagnating, and shortages of essentials like sugar, more and more people, including Mrs. Gandhi herself, are favoring a new system, based on the French presidential model. The army, one million strong, remains on the sidelines, but it has become a matter of public speculation whether this can always be taken for granted.

#### A culture of violence.

India is an extremely violent country. This was always to some extent true, and the ideal of Gandhian nonviolence finds little confirmation either in the blood-curdling history of Hinduism or in the circumstances surrounding independence in 1947—when half a million people were slain and another eight million made refugees in a wave of Hindu-Muslim violence.

A randomly selected newspaper, the *Hindustan Times* of Nov. 13, brutally underscores the point. The front page alone reports three incidents: In the province of Assam students protesting the immigration of Bengalis have brought the administration to a standstill and blocked production of one third of India's domestically-produced oil; in Delhi students from the southern state of Kerala have surrounded the house of the chief minister of their state visiting the capital; and in the Nasik region of Uttar

Pradesh province farmers have torn up and burned a large number of railway sleepers, thereby preventing 40 trains carrying essential goods from reaching the area.

On the inside pages we read that in Orissa province police fired tear gas to disperse 500 students, while a report from Lucknow states that 60 dacoits or rural bandits were killed in the first half of October by police, and that another 789 were being charged with illegal arms trafficking in the same area. The opposition Socialist Party leader George Fernandes is also reported as saying that in just one district of Uttar Pradesh alone police had killed 40 people between June and October this year and were now killing at random, while in two other provinces, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, young people were being shot on sight on suspicion of being "Naxalites," the term now generically applied to all rural opposition militants.

This social violence is accompanied by a rising tide of communal violence pitting Hindus against the 40 million Muslims who remain within northern India. Riots and killings became increasingly common this year and I went through one town, Godhra in Gujarat province, where a curfew had been imposed after several people were killed in clashes following a dispute between a Hindu and a Muslim vegetable seller. From the heavily guarded railway station one could see a line of shops gutted by fire.

The official attitude is to play down the internal roots of these clashes, and Mrs. Gandhi has taken the oldest way out of all, talking darkly of a "foreign hand," that is, some Muslim conspiracy, behind the riots. Indeed, a patina of self-righteous chauvinism lies over much of Indian political life, and it is common to find supposedly progressive commentators denouncing the struggles of the Naga and Mizo nationalities in the north-east as being the work of the CIA.

Women have paid a heavy price for this new violence in Indian public life. Rape has become increasingly common, both by groups of marauding teenagers in major cities, and by the police, who use it as a means of intimidating strikers and their families in confrontations. The main left-wing parties, and a growing nationwide feminist movement, have taken up the issue of rape and are now pressing for changes in the law to bring Indian legislation into line with that in some Western countries.

The largest left-wing party is the Communist Party of India (Marxist), which broke away from the orthodox pro-Soviet CPI in 1964 and which has maintained a position independent of both Moscow and Peking. The CPM's membership has grown several times over to 238,000 and it holds power in three states, whose populations total over 100 million—two of these, Kerala and West Bengal, are of substantial importance. In one sense it is as if communists had been elected to the governorships of California, Massachusetts and Iowa. Yet as CPM secretary-general E.M.S. Namboodiripad made clear to me, these electoral victories can also be a trap: Provincial power is limited by the center, and the population expects far more than the party can deliver. The CPM is also finding it difficult to break out of its three strongholds and become a national party, and is extremely worried by the growth in social and communal violence over which no party has any influence.

Paradoxically, it is the very diversity of Indian society that has so far proved to be a source of strength to its rulers. Secession of any kind is excluded by the constitution, and protest movements and outbreaks of violence remain regional or local. The mass of the population remains entrapped by particularist ideologies—of caste, region, religion or language. A nationwide ruling class exists, but the opposition has yet to find an ideology or an organizational form that can match the opposition. Were it to do so, one could expect India's rulers to resort to even more direct suppression to retain the substantial political and economic power they now hold.

Fred Halliday, a fellow of the IPS Transnational Institute, writes frequently for *In These Times*.

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## FRANCE

# Chomsky's defense of civil liberties stirs hornets' nest

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS  
**N**OAM CHOMSKY HAS GOT himself embroiled in a polemic with French intellectuals that has been confused and embittered by a deep gap in political culture.

The two sides cannot even agree what the issue is. To the MIT linguist, the issue is clear and simple: freedom of expression. When asked by friends, he did not hesitate to put his illustrious name (Chomsky is more famous here in France, both as linguist and as politically engaged individual, than in the U.S.) to a petition on behalf of Lyons University professor Robert Faurisson's right to free speech.

To French liberal intellectuals like Pierre Vidal-Naquet, the issue is more complicated, and turns on the credibility of Faurisson's contention that there were no gas chambers, and thus no extermination of Jews, in Nazi concentration camps. When, last fall, Vidal-Naquet called the petition "scandalous," Chomsky retorted with a three-page lecture to the French—or at least to "certain segments of the French intelligentsia, who have demonstrated that they have not the slightest concern for fact or reason."

"Among people who have learned something from the 18th century (say, Voltaire) it is a truism, hardly deserving discussion that the defense of the right of free expression is not restricted to ideas one approves of, and that it is precisely in the case of ideas found most offensive that these rights must be most vigorously defended," Chomsky told the French. "All of this is well-understood in the United States, which is why there has been nothing like the Faurisson affair here. In France, where a civil libertarian tradition is evidently not well-established and where there have been deep totalitarian strains among the intelligentsia for many years, matters are apparently quite different." This endearing message was published where it was bound to have an effect, as preface to Robert Faurisson's brand new book defending his thesis against accusations of "falsifying history."

Faurisson has in fact been taken to court by the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism (LICRA) on grounds that its cause would be damaged by doubts cast on "the historic truth of the industrial extermination of over six million people." LICRA asks a symbolic one franc in damages. In addition to this pending lawsuit, Faurisson was transferred by the University to correspondence courses after his classes were disrupted.

The petition states that Faurisson has been subject to a "vicious campaign of harassment, intimidation, slander and physical violence in a crude attempt to silence him." There seems to be no French language version of the petition. To whom, then, is it really addressed? Since he is still drawing full pay and expressing his ideas in print and elsewhere, most French people following the case consider Chomsky's likening of the case to persecution of Soviet dissidents a gross exaggeration. They are annoyed by Chomsky's self-righteous tone and unconcerned about the substance of the controversy. Chomsky insists that it doesn't matter if Faurisson's ideas are "horrendous" and recalls the American Civil Liberties Union defense of the right of the American Nazi Party to parade through Skokie.

Here looms the political culture gap. It separates the Anglo-Saxon tradition of the lone gadfly, defending principle

for its own sake, from the continental European tradition of the more "organic intellectual" whose ideas inevitably involve him or her on one side or another of social conflicts.

By reducing this complex difference to such supposedly French traits as eagerness "to line up and march off to the beat of drums," Chomsky lumped together quite separate phenomena.

The French could retort that Chomsky is naive. Isn't the famous Anglo-Saxon tolerance based on the complacent assurance that anyone with odd ideas can rant on (like at Hyde Park Corner) and no one will pay attention, whether the ideas are right or wrong?

It seems to me that both political cultures have the defects that correspond to their respective strong points. The specialization of American intellectual life leads to greater respect for the facts but

Pol Potian. The linguist's protests to the magazine were abridged or distorted.

One French intellectual who understood and defended Chomsky was Serge Thion, a talented polemicist and author of books on Cambodia and apartheid with a past of militant support to anti-colonialist struggles in Third World countries. When Chomsky came through Paris in May 1978, Thion introduced him to his friends at an obscure anarcho-Marxist publishing house called *la Vieille Taupe* (the old mole) and got him to sign the petition for Faurisson. Thion's defense of Chomsky against the *Nouvel Observateur* appeared in last September's issue of the review *Esprit*. Chomsky then dashed off his three-page diatribe on French disregard for civil rights and sent it to Thion, who slapped it on Faurisson's book, published a few weeks later by *la Vieille Taupe*.

Did Chomsky realize the hornets' nest he was shaking? French intellectuals do not all swear by the *Nouvel Observateur* and felt insulted without understanding why Chomsky was so soured on them.

Chomsky has refused to get involved in appraising Faurisson's research. In France, it is widely assumed that Faurisson is motivated by anti-Semitism and backed by obscure political forces. Or is he merely an isolated, eccentric individual with an *idée fixe*? Faurisson partly explains his own eccentricity by pointing to half-British parentage. The 51-year-old professor claims it was purely his passion for close critical reading of texts and documents that led him to examine the evidence on Nazi gas chambers. After years of studying the massive docu-

Faurisson was in his field of textual criticism.

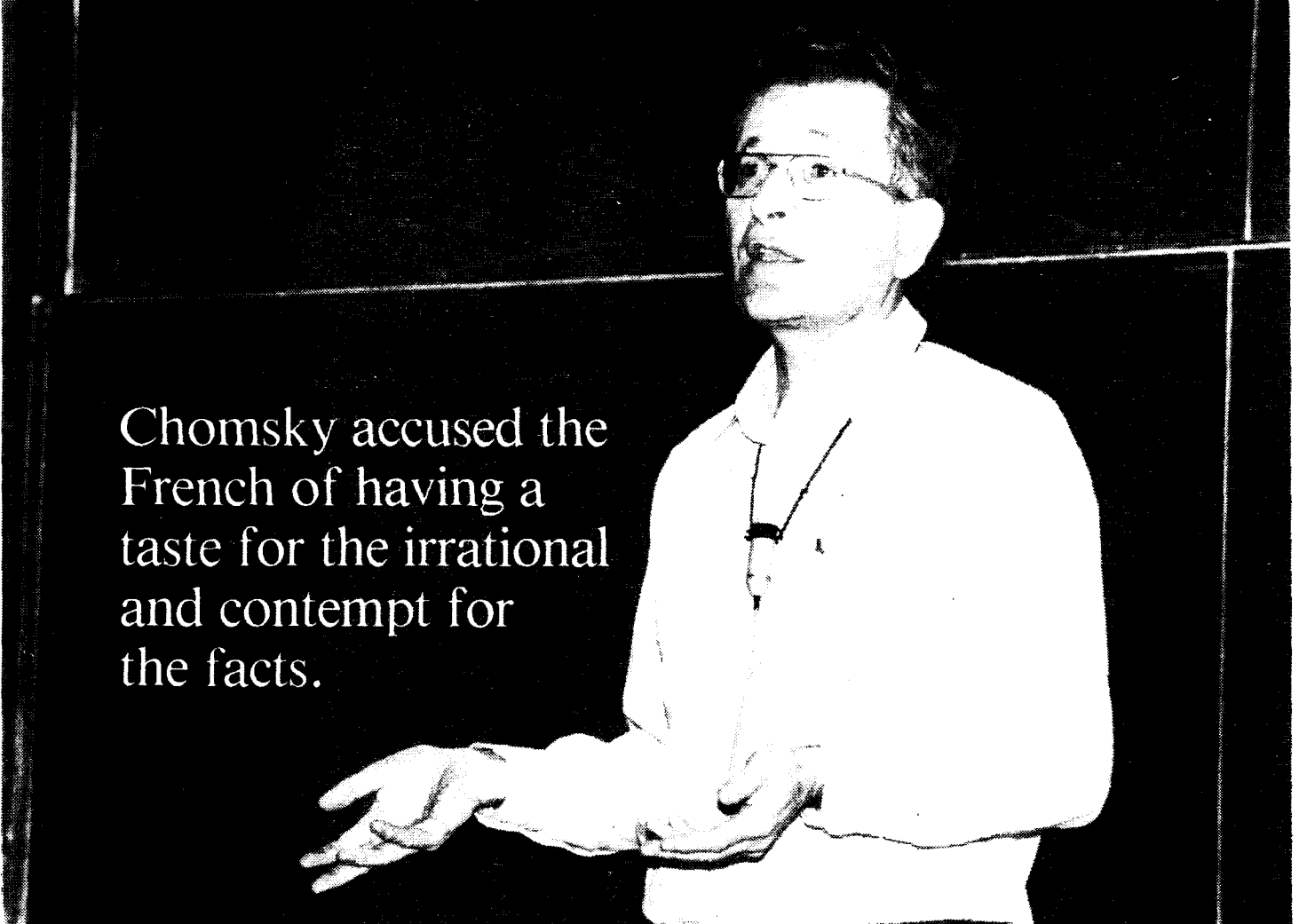
The questions Faurisson raises about the gas chambers may be startling and confusing to a reader who has always taken the matter for granted without knowing much about it. But his very haste in rushing to broad historical conclusions undermines his claim to be nothing more than an innocent crank obsessed with getting facts straight.

## The "founding myth."

The French who sniff some sort of ideological project behind the publication of Faurisson by *la Vieille Taupe* are surely right, although they may jump to the wrong interpretation. The old mole is surely not planning to dig up Hitler and send resuscitated Nazis marching down the boulevards. Rather, by discrediting the belief in Nazi gas chambers, the publishers of Faurisson hope to destroy the main ideological support of the existing world order.

Serge Thion argues that the protective mechanism of the powers that be towards the "founding myth" lends legitimacy to the Soviet and Western regimes that defeated Germany. "Our political regime is founded, religiously, on the victory in 1945 of the forces of Good over those of Evil. Whatever we do (colonial wars, exploitation of poor countries, treatment of foreigners), we belong to a genealogy of Good, and our duty, our loyalty, is to strike down Evil whenever it slyly raises its head," he writes in his book, *Verite Historique ou Verite Politique*.

However, an event's function as



Chomsky accused the French of having a taste for the irrational and contempt for the facts.

also tends to abandon questions outside one's field to experts—a tendency Chomsky courageously combatted during the Vietnam war. The French effort to preserve a wider view and judge matters outside one's field may slide into disregard for facts and a corresponding tendency to take sides according to an overall system of values.

The Faurisson affair, with articles in leading newspapers and above all an interview in *Le Monde* in which Chomsky accused French intellectuals of "hysterical reactions," "a taste for the irrational and contempt for the facts," has seriously discredited Chomsky with the French reading public, which can't imagine what bit him. In fact, Chomsky's lambasting of *les intellectuels* has a background unknown to most.

It all goes back three or four years to the *Nouvel Observateur*'s shabby treatment of Chomsky. This modish weekly was then serving as main forum for the "new philosophers," celebrating Solzhenitsyn, discovering the Gulag and featuring articles bemoaning lost revolutionary illusions. The story is long and complicated, but Chomsky seemed to irritate the *Nouvel Obs* by questioning the figures of Khmer Rouge massacre victims. The paper suggested Chomsky was a hardened

mentation on Nazi concentration camps and visiting what is left of them, Faurisson says he concluded:

- That gas chambers, and therefore extermination camps, never existed. The gas chambers were a sort of collective illusion, fostered by Allied war propaganda.

- That "Hitler never ordered anyone to be killed on account of his race or religion." (This sentence, often repeated by Faurisson, has aroused the greatest indignation.)

- That Germany interned the Jews in Eastern Europe for forced labor because they were security risks (as Japanese-Americans were interned in the U.S.).

Faurisson thus describes World War II as the final outcome of a fatal escalation between Germany and the Jews. Such a sweeping re-interpretation of history goes far beyond Faurisson's investigation into the material existence of gas chambers.

Vidal-Naquet acknowledges that Faurisson is persuasive on one point, that is, his demonstration that the *Diary of Anne Frank* was largely, if not entirely, written by someone else, in all probability her father, Otto Frank, sole survivor of the family. But as Vidal-Naquet comments, this in no way detracts from the tragedy of Anne's fate. At least on this point

"founding myth" and its historical reality are two different matters. One can be criticized without questioning the other. The inevitable political abuses of the "founding myth" can create a desire to reject its factual basis so that the world (in the Chinese term) can "change color." The potential power of such an ideological explosion is more readily sensed in Europe than in America, because of differences in political experience and environment. The sense of danger surrounding the gas chamber controversy may be hard for Americans to understand and does not really mean less freedom of expression and more conformity but a different system of coordinating the two.

It is often when stepping aside to avoid falling into the last historical trap that people fall into the next one. There is no real sign of any popular revival of Nazism and false alarms on that score may well distract attention from more present evils. But the deepening economic crisis and political disappointments have created a genuine anxiety that some wild irrational movement like fascism is bound to arise. Much of the acrimonious polemic shredding the left reflects nothing more than conflicting notions of what the hobgoblin is going to look like and where it is coming from. ■



# Chrysler

Continued from page 3

auto workers' wages are not the problem. Ford president Philip Caldwell does so in the latest issue of the *Harvard Business Review*. "Relative to most areas of the world, the United States is a low-cost producer, even with the high compensation U.S. workers enjoy in this country. In autos, unit costs in the United States are generally better than in Europe and most Third World areas. With the decline in the yen after the Iranian crisis, Japan has been the outstanding exception."

A recent European analysis of auto company labor costs, corrected to include not only benefits but also social costs of health insurance, housing and commuter transit subsidies, showed the U.S. at \$17.68 an hour, Germany at \$19.14 an hour, Belgium \$18.42, France \$13.11 and Italy \$13.96. Japan was the big exception at \$11.36, especially since Japanese output per man-hour in auto is probably close to or slightly above that in the U.S..

The reason for the high productivity is largely that Japanese auto production has been maintained at full capacity, meaning not only that every investment is used most efficiently but also that any more efficient innovation is worth employing immediately. That full-throttle approach, which has led the industry to work overtime to export to the U.S. and to expand capacity that is destined solely for export, is partly a result of the commitment of the government and banks in Japan to the aggressive expansion of its industry. There would be no cliff-hang-

ers over a Chrysler bankruptcy in Japan: with government assurances, banks would extend loans, which run at a higher interest ratio to equity there than in the U.S., to make its turnaround.

But the problem is that Japanese auto workers are underpaid, not that U.S. workers are overpaid. The auto industry, like several others in Japan, is technologically as advanced as any in the world, but it is part of an economy that is still backward in many respects. For example, the overall productivity of Japanese workers was less than two-thirds that of American workers in 1979. Although auto workers have been increasing their wages considerably faster than other manufacturing workers in Japan, whose wages have been in turn growing faster than those of U.S. workers, there is a limit to the speed with which they can catch up with workers in the technologically equivalent industries of the U.S., Germany and other European countries. As a result, Japanese cars have a \$4,000 to \$5,500 landed price advantage in the U.S.

When Americans rapidly switched preferences to smaller, more efficient cars and U.S. companies, which had been playing to short-term signals rather than the long haul, were not ready with the cars for the market, the Japanese were easily able to seize a rapidly growing share of the market. Last year 76 percent of the market in the U.S. consisted of compacts or smaller; in 1978 it was only 56 percent. Last year imports took 26.7 percent of the market, compared to 21.9 percent the year before. The Japanese share was 24.3 percent in 1980, up from 16.6 percent in 1979. Toyota nearly sold as many cars as Chrysler. For the first time since the auto era took off, the U.S. was not the leading producer of cars. Instead, it was Japan.

## The volume problem.

Chrysler's dilemmas were intensified by a problem for the whole U.S. industry, insufficient volume, which in turn reflects many factors: high interest rates, unavailability of credit, OPEC and de-regulated domestic oil prices, gas taxes taking a larger share of income, fears of



gasoline shortages, decreased driving, a generally sluggish economy, and higher prices on cars. (Though car prices have been rising in real terms since 1974, after falling for decades, the inflated prices—especially when the cars are loaded with the more profitable options—scare off lots of buyers, even if in real terms the increase has been less dramatic.)

In addition to stimulating the economy generally with targeted industrial aid, public enterprises or expanded public works, such as railroad or public housing construction, the government could stimulate auto sales with special credits such as the UAW has proposed—a bounty for scrapping old junkers or a sliding credit of, for example, \$100 for every mile per gallon improvement in mileage.

represented by a newly purchased car (with a minimum level of improvement to qualify). But instead of a stimulative, expansionary, full-employment policy linked with selective price controls, the government continues its managed austerity—and then uses Chrysler as a tool in that strategy to further depress workers' wages (and thus effective demand for cars).

But the problem of Chrysler and Ford is also a problem of Japan—not, however, of imports in general. Without some controls on imports from Japan, such as through an orderly marketing agreement, neither Chrysler nor Ford is likely to be able successfully to make its cars, since the Japanese will be able to slice off a larger portion as the market expands. A Department of Transportation assessment of the auto industry last week concluded that such controls were needed for the sake not only of the auto industry but of U.S. manufacturing generally.

The cost of controls limiting imports to 1976 levels, with an annual 5 percent escalation over five years, could cost \$4 billion, according to the International Trade Commission. But Trade Readjustment Assistance has already cost \$4 billion and lost taxes have cost cities, states and the federal government probably another \$1.2 billion or more. Of course, it is essential to link such import restraints with controls over the auto companies: price controls, plant closing legislation, requirements that investment be directed to useful domestic needs. But that course would have been vastly preferable to using unusually low Japanese pay to depress wages of auto workers and, consequently, wages of other U.S. workers as well.

But the biggest problem for Chrysler was that the federal government has not been more involved. A Chrysler in which the public had a large equity holding and a long-term commitment would have confidence of private lenders, suppliers and consumers. It could also redirect some of its resources to other ends, such as building co-generating units or mass transit equipment. If could be committed, as government policy should be, to maintaining the wages of auto workers, not deliberately driving them down. In retrospect, the decision of the UAW to abandon its initial inclinations in that direction helped to slide the union and all its workers—not only those at Chrysler—deeper into economic hardship. Lacking any sympathy from the White House or Congress, lacking a political movement to make the demand stick, greater public interest and control would have been extremely difficult to win. Yet the examples of Renault and Volkswagen, two government-controlled auto companies that are the strongest in Europe, demonstrate the viability of such a strategy. ■

## Some Books You Can't Find At Your Local Drugstore (Or Even Most Local Bookstores)

- 401. **Mark of the Beast: Special Issue of Southern Exposure** on the Ku Klux Klan  
A survey of the history of the Klan ranging from scholarly essays to first-person accounts. Also an assessment of the present threat. \$3.00 paper
- 402. **Number Our Days** by Barbara Meyerhoff  
The moving account of elderly Jews from Venice, California—their rituals, joys, pain and mostly their ways of surviving. \$4.95 paper
- 403. **The American Future: New Visions Beyond Old Frontiers** by Tom Hayden  
Using studies of inflation and employment and data on solar energy and cancer, the author calls for basic changes in the U.S. system, elaborating an alternative, "economic democracy." \$6.00 paper
- 404. **The Doctors' Case Against the Pill** by Barbara Seaman  
Lucid and thoroughly documented, this book gives alarming new evidence against contraceptive pills, for which at least 40 million prescriptions are filled each year. \$6.50 paper
- 405. **My Search for B. Traven** by Jonah Raskin  
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☛ A Key West smuggler ("Me and the boys gave Hemingway the stuff he used in writin' that book—what'd he call it—*To Have and Have Not*!")

☛ An Irish maid from Massachusetts ("Once I was making a bed, and right beside it was a five dollar bill...My face burned like fire, for I knowed I was getting tested")



# LETTERS

**IN THESE TIMES** is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## ISRAEL AND THE PALESTINIANS

**D**IANA JOHNSTONE WROTE AN INTERESTING article about the Socialist International Congress recently held in Madrid (ITT, Dec. 17, 1980). However, I disagree with her criticism of the Congress' resolution on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that describes the Israeli Labor Party as the only viable force for peace in Israel and supports the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. The Congress took into account the practical situation and how peace and justice can be secured.

The situation has these elements:

1. The PLO has to date not agreed to recognize the Israeli State even in pre-1967 borders. Thus, having suffered five wars in the last 32 years, the Israeli population is not eager to see a Palestinian state on its borders.
2. Israel is the only democracy in the Near East. Its present government is practicing a foreign policy of religious fanatical expansionism that freedom-loving people abhor. However, due to the existing democratic institutions, it is possible and likely that this government will be voted out of office during 1981 and that a government whose most solid support is the Israeli trade unions will replace it. Through this government, the Israeli people and people of goodwill everywhere will have a far better chance of securing a just peace between the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

3. The primary equation remains. On the one side, the PLO must recognize the legitimacy and security of the State of Israel. On the other side, Israel must negotiate with the PLO for the self-determination of the Palestinian People on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Socialist International took all these factors into consideration.

—Lee Marsh  
Berkeley, Calif.

## SOCIALISM AND RELIGION

**F**RED CLARKSON RECENTLY ARGUED (ITT, Dec. 24, 1980) that many American socialists fail to take seriously the religious community. The charge is accurate, but the problem goes deeper than developing parallel allies. The religious question has fundamental theoretical and strategic implications for socialists. A few quick points to ponder:

1. The U.S. is a profoundly religious nation, but the American left is predominantly secular. Result? An eccentric subculture, out of touch with the American majority, including workers and the poor.

2. The world is entering a "post-modern" period, signaled by the growing public impact of religion. So the rise of religious politics in Iran, Poland, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Israel, the U.S., etc.

3. Modern communications and transportation have made it possible for traditional (and heavily religious) "backwaters" to impact directly national and global politics.

4. Secular humanism's "belief" in the emancipatory power of science has been weakened by the nuclear, the atom bomb, ecological destruction, the erosion of community and the rise of the totalitarian state.

As a result, where socialism has developed a religious dimension, it has taken on cultural power. Where it does not, it

often concedes the terrain to the right. That's what is happening in the U.S. The very future of American socialism may depend in part on how it deals with religion.

—Joe Holland  
Washington, D.C.

## THE PERUVIAN LEFT

**T**HIS BRIEF NOTE SHOULD BE OF INTEREST to the American left, firstly because it is news from the Americas and secondly because it shows that the democratic left does not have to be splintered.

Last May a center candidate, Fernando Belaunde Terry, was elected to the presidency of the Republic of Peru after some 12 years of leftist military dictatorship. In November, the Izquierda Unida (IU) elected several mayors in the south and east of Peru. The most populous of these cities include Arequipa, Puno and Pucallpa. Regional leftist parties also elected mayors in Juliaca and Moquegua. The IU includes about four or five national Marxist groups, one of which is the Peruvian Communist Party (Moscow line).

The Peruvian Alliance for the American Revolution (APRA), which was a leftist party in the old days, seems to be splitting into a leftist faction and a rightist faction.

It is interesting that the left in Peru is strong and making progress in the democratic context. There may be some parallels to be drawn with neighboring Chile during the Allende period. However, the much greater Native American population in Peru and their contribution to the personnel of the military establishment may preclude the fate of the left as it developed in Chile.

—Carl Widmer  
Puno, Peru

## PLEASURE

**I**T'S A PLEASURE TO SEE YOUR newspaper in my mailbox each week. It gives me hope that some folks in this country aren't swallowing the stuff dished out by normal newspapers. I always use your articles in my political economy seminars at Evergreen State College. Keep up the excellent and revealing reports on international events.

I hope your subscribers increase so you can continue bringing the facts to the American people.

—Nina Carter  
Olympia, Wash.

## POWERS THAT BE

**P**AT AUFDERHEIDE'S PLECTION PUBLIC broadcasting (ITT, Dec. 17) was timely and most informative. One point that needs more attention is the use of PBS to propagandize. One of the most outrageous propagandizers is Bill Moyers, and apparently PBS recognizes this.

After Moyers' interview with a General Motors executive in which Moyers permitted a number of false statements to go unchallenged, I sent for a transcript. I couldn't get it. They sent me a transcript of an entirely different broadcast. After three tries, I concluded that the transcript I wanted had been suppressed.

We have experienced in Minnesota the story detailed by Aufderheide. The man who developed our public television station was too independent for some of the powers that be. He was drummed out by

a campaign by the Cowles Minneapolis press and the Citizens League, an instrument of big business. His successor is a man who boasts about how much money he raises, and who claims vast improvements in programming. The money-raising is probably true. The Cowles influence blocked foundation grants while the former executive was in office. As for the programming, we get such stuff as the Moyers propaganda these days.

—Fredrick S. Gram  
St. Paul, Minn.

## SUPERSTITION

**F**RED CLARKSON'S LETTER (ITT, DEC. 24) raises a cogent point and, at the same time, brings into focus a very grave danger.

Of course he is right when he says that the left should support church groups such as the National Council of Churches whenever and wherever they take a progressive position on vital issues facing the American people. When you are fighting a fire, you simply do not turn away anyone who comes with a bucket of water.

It is absolutely imperative, however, that we never lose sight of the fact that the basic stock in trade of the Church is the perpetuation and extension of the influence of superstition and supernaturalism. When making common cause with the Church, we must remain constantly aware of this fact and not allow ourselves to become identified with it.

—Ted Means  
New Orleans, La.

## A FOCUS

**I**'VE BEEN A READER OF *IN THESE TIMES* for over two years. However, last month your publication has become more important to me than before. I find that I am clipping more and more articles for my personal files.

It is as if the Reagan victory has given you a focus on the inter-relationship of your articles. For example, the articles on European socialists ("Beyond the image of nuts and dilettantes" and "Socialist parties champion interests of the Third World") have far more impact when read with "Reconstituting power in America."

As an organizer I'm concerned about strategy. What is helpful in building a local strategy is to have colleagues who struggle with seeing and showing the global linkages.

—Zan White  
Sneedville, Tenn.

## THE NEW BUG

**B**ILL DOMHOFF'S "SYSTEMIC ARGUMENT" against the viability of third parties in America reminded me of the story of the bumble bee. Despite all the techno-scientific evidence to the contrary, *the bumblebee flies*, probably because it wants to, it can, and it is *not* an aeronautical engineer!

The Citizens Party is not a "third party" but the nucleus of an American labor party. At this time we are going through a very busy period of soul-searching and reorganization. Chapters everywhere are reviewing the campaign, recruiting members, planning strategies and writing charters.

Very important political and organizational questions are being discussed and debated openly, in a democratic fashion. Some of these are: 1. Do we want a radical or a moderate party? 2. Do we want the party structured as a network or as a hierarchy? and, 3. Do we want our leadership at all levels to be merely administrative, or revolutionary?

Not all of us agreed that running candidates for president and vice-president in 1980 was the right course of action at the time, but we all agree that *we need a party now*. Once this reorganization is over, by the end of 1981, we will have a political party capable of running and electing candidates as well as performing other more direct political functions at the grassroots.

The Citizens Party today is in the same position VW salespeople found

themselves in the '50s. We have the idea of the future. The Democrats (GM) and the Republicans (Ford) are not going to go away, but we will take one third of the electorate away from them. That will mark the beginning of real change in American politics.

—Art Liebrez  
Corte Madera, Calif.

## DOUBLE STANDARDS

**O**NE CAN READ KIM MOODY'S ACCOUNT of the National Conference on Union Democracy with that oft-quoted line from Dr. Boswell to Samuel Johnson in mind: "Seldom is a splendid story wholly true."

Of course, most of your readers are for "reform" in any of our institutions, and those labor guys are an easy target. It does, however, depend upon the union, and the times, and the personality, as anyone familiar with labor history could attest to. The legendary union folk heroes of the old left and also many of the New Left also happened to be some of the best of autocrats: John L. Lewis, Harry Bridges, Walter Reuther (reading resource: Old Leftie Len DeCaux, *Labor Radical*).

One of the problems in addressing this question is the tendency of observers like Moody to compartmentalize "union reform" as something like a Moral Majority-type issue, i.e., you are a believer or you are part of an establishment that is self-perpetrating at best or criminal at worst. This confusion about "just what union reform is and how to get it" (ITT, Nov. 12-18) is apparent because the participants of reform become advocates of particular candidates of other unions. Thus the acknowledgement that the Association for Union Democracy "has been active in a number of campaigns," including that in 1977 in the Steelworkers.

Joe Rauh, a payroller for many years with the UAW, says that he is "outraged when union readers and their hired lawyers, public relations experts and intellectuals try to bully critics among dues-payers." We must assume that Rauh is not a "hired lawyer" in his many appearances for those who have been unsuccessful in non-UAW union elections and that he "persuades" rather than "bullies," but his fees still match his rhetoric.

Rauh has advanced AUD in the liberal community with the utilization of the worst possible transfer device, suggesting that many of those who oppose incumbent administrations could be murdered for their efforts. His latest AUD appeal letter lists his "reform" Steelworkers candidate between "Jock Yablonski who gave his life" in the Miners Union and two members of the Painters Union "who were murdered for resisting corruption."

With that depth in a "reform movement" one can understand why the Steelworkers at the conference "gathered in the halls to swap stories." For those who try to equate unsuccessful union politics in the only large industrial union that has retained the referendum for International Office (the Steelworkers) with instances of murder and corruption in other unrelated unions, give full measure of their bankruptcy.

And if Joe Rauh is not himself a "hired lawyer" he should declare that his services offered to all nonincumbent "reformers" in the anticipation that they would hire him if elected. Sophisticated readers of ITT hopefully might conclude that the activist attorneys at the AUD conference would share those aspirations.

—Russell W. Gibbons  
Pittsburgh

P.S. The writer describes himself as "a hired public relations expert" for the Steelworkers.

*Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.*



# PERSPECTIVES

## Homophobia keeps gays in an "outlaw class"

By Richard Stone

**THE GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT OF THE LAST TEN YEARS** has produced visibility and a measure of credibility for homosexuals in a society that previously only recognized flaming fags, diesel dykes and perverts. Efforts by gays to earn social recognition and basic political rights continue to achieve positive results. For example, a protest lodged by a coalition led by the National Gay Task Force against the CBS production *Gay Power, Gay Politics* was largely endorsed by the National News Council this fall. The program pur-

leaves them easy prey to threats of denunciation by gay-haters.

Homophobia is most likely at the root of the political expediency that allowed passage of a recent House measure denying gays access to federal funds for legal assistance in seeking to protect or affirm their rights as homosexuals. This amendment to the Legal Services Corporation appropriation bill was defeated on voice vote, but carried when author Larry McDonald (D-Ga.) called for a rollcall. Fear of constituency opinion may be the reason for the cross-overs; so might shallowness of conviction that gays deserve equal rights as citizens.

Another example came up in a movie I previewed for Gay Awareness days at our local university. It was a short entitled *Early Homosexual Fears* that showed teenagers discussing things they'd done that made them question their sexual normality and social fitness. These included "playing with" someone of the same sex before puberty; feeling tenderness toward, or desiring physical closeness with, a same-gender friend; being homosexually approached by a close acquaintance and not being sure that it was wrong.

Such fears are not limited to youth, so we might add adult situations like these:

•Gender ambiguity, the uncertainty

a variety of contributing factors. They may have a neurotic element, but all research I've seen that was not based on a pathological sample population indicates the incidence of neurosis is no greater than in heterosexual attractions. In fact, homosexual partnering seems remarkably similar to heterosexuality with two major exceptions: the distortions imposed by homophobia, and the absence of the restraints society has placed on male-female sexual contact. (This latter category includes such things as "woman as property," protection against extra-familial pregnancies, and gender roles.)

Perhaps there is no way a heterosexual can be convinced against deeply instilled prejudice that homoerotic attraction can be healthy. Nevertheless, there are millions of normally functioning, well-adjusted homosexuals out here. For someone interested in judging for himself instead of depending on hearsay and innuendo, many of us are now purposefully visible, to be met either informally or through organizations; and George Weinberg's book *Society and the Healthy Homosexual* is a good introduction to a new way of regarding us.

As an added impetus to confronting homophobia, I urge you to think about what happens to people who come to have a homosexual identity, i.e. to accept that they have an abiding desire to share sexual intimacy with a person, or persons, of their own gender. They accept that these feelings will not pass, are different from admiration or friendship, and are appropriate to their nature.

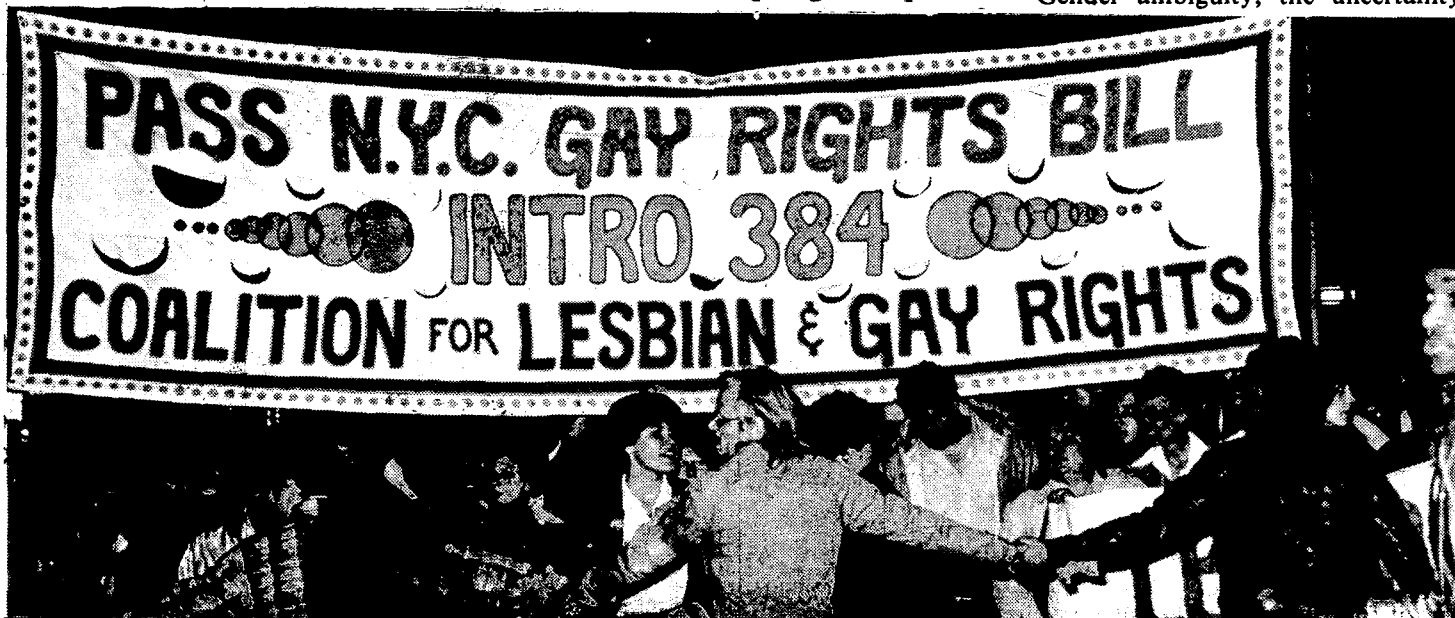
For some few independent individuals, such knowledge is liberating: it frees them to pursue a destiny unrestricted by social rules and decorums.

For a larger number, it engenders a desperate rebelliousness that can be seen (at least in part) as a healthy response to stigmatizing, criminalizing pressure. John Rechy's *The Sexual Outlaw* deals persuasively with this response. But for a majority of gays, homosexual identity initially means failure. We may struggle to limit our homosexual tendencies—to erotic fantasy, or just to physical contact, or to intimacy without sex. We may rationalize living in secrecy, saying we are afraid of losing jobs or upsetting our parents, spouses, friends; and while those fears are legitimate, what we fear most is admitting our failure to meet social expectations. We may burrow into the gay ghetto, cut off from society-at-large. The well-documented process of "coming out" is the way some of us begin to reverse feelings of inadequacy, sickness, shame and despair.

Many of us have been incorporated into social structures, vocationally, culturally, politically. For us, coming out often undermines our faith in social wisdom, leads us to question the very bases of social justice. We discover that because of our sexual orientation we can be fired, or not hired, without legal recourse. We can be evicted from our homes with no equal rights protection. We can be denied custody of children on the sheer presumption that a gay or lesbian household is *ipso facto* an unfit environment. Many of the economic benefits given to heterosexual households are not granted to us, and bequests to even long-time mates can be challenged in court.

True, there are now states where consenting-adults bills have de-criminalized primary sexual activities (others remain ready to give us life-imprisonment if we are discovered making love). True, there are localities that have ended vice-squad surveillance of our meeting places (and others where busts in fag bars or parks are still police stock-in-trade). There are churches that have affirmed our humanity and decency (while others continue to revile us). But even in those places where we are no longer oppressed, we are most certainly discriminated against.

At this time, homosexuals, having emerged from centuries-old existence as an untouchable, outlaw caste, offer a tradition of courage and unconventional wisdom of the kind needed for redeeming human sexuality, for supplanting fear and ignorance with respect. The dialectic process that the gay rights movement, along with feminism, has initiated holds forth tremendous opportunity for the liberation of redemptive spirit.



Demonstrations like this one have helped legitimize homosexuality in American society.

ported to show homosexuals in San Francisco using their numbers to force city politicians to support deviant gay lifestyles. CBS was criticized for prejudicially injecting material about unusual sexual practices among gays; for exaggerating the political concessions made by then mayoralty-candidate (now Mayor) Dianne Feinstein; and for inserting applause into the sound track, thus (as the station's telecast retraction put it) breaching its own journalistic standards.

And in California, a state commission has been established to study discrimina-

tion based on sexual orientation and invasions of the right of privacy for social minorities (the handicapped and elderly as well as gays). The commission is intended to provide information as the basis for legislation.

Such events indicate a gradually-growing perception that gay people are bona fide—and, of course, voting, money-spending—members of society. Nevertheless, even liberals still have deeply ingrained homophobia, an anxiety about and mistrust of homosexuality. Homophobia both limits their sympathies and

about meeting the tests of socially-prescribed manliness or femininity;

•Romantic admiration for members of one's own gender group as idealized physical or character types;

•Same-sex sexual contact arising from circumstance (e.g., one-gender environments like prison) or an immediate need for physical or emotional relief.

Many people experience one or two of these situations, are unsettled by them, then suppress them while rejecting homosexuals all the more.

A few may go so far as a soul-searching exploration to reconcile their lives and needs with the social norms they are not meeting, redefining their idea of heterosexuality and gender-role guidelines.

But throughout our culture, approved behavior between members of the same sex is limited. Fear of being thought "queer" still severely restricts the possibilities of anyone's relationships with 50 percent of humankind.

The movie spoken of above addressed itself thoughtfully to the anxiety-provoked restrictions on heterosexuals brought on by homophobia. But it had an unspoken sub-text: true homosexuality is something to dread.

Now this was a liberal film. It validated feelings and behavior well beyond the polarized sex-role stereotype still widely held. Yet it was blind to its fundamental sexual ethic—that any kind of sexual attraction or interest that a given individual (or self-proclaimed moral majority) does not understand is perverse.

Hard as it may be for a heterosexual to accept, the desire for same-sex contact need not result only from affection or special circumstance—although that is the kind of "homosexuality" straights can themselves experience, or at least imagine as possible for them. Some of us develop erotic interest in members of our own sex as naturally as heterosexuals develop erotic attraction to individuals of the other gender.

These homo-erotic attachments are not chosen; they evolve organically from



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# IN DEPTH

## The present danger is that the CPD will succeed

By Jerry Sanders

TWO DAYS AFTER RONALD REAGAN'S ELECTION, THREE of his top national security advisers warned that the nation could expect a massive increase in military spending. The earnest Reagan spokesmen—Eugene Rostow, Paul Nitze and William Van Cleave—represented the brain trust of the Committee on the Present Danger (CPD). Eschewed by the Carter transition team four years ago and snubbed in subsequent White House councils on foreign policy, their odyssey from political exile back to the pinnacle of power is a fascinating tale. As architects of Reagan's foreign policy, the Committee on the Present Danger deserves the scrutiny accorded the Trilateral Commission when Carter rode into Washington to take the reins of power four years ago.

CPD luminaries Rostow, Nitze, Van Cleave, and Reagan's most trusted national security adviser Richard Allen were purged from power and banished into what many predicted would be permanent political exile under Carter. Their dramatic resurrection is a telling triumph for the CPD, which sees Reagan's smashing victory sounding the death knell on Vance-like reluctance to threaten the use of military force to achieve foreign policy objectives, an attitude they dismiss as the "post-Vietnam syndrome." With a popular mandate in hand, their intention is to return American foreign policy to the militaristic doctrines they fashioned during the Cold War. Reagan's reference to the Vietnam war as a "noble cause" was no more inadvertent than was his promise to scrap SALT II and drive toward military superiority. Both stem from those who surround the president-elect.

The power struggle that brought about the current Committee on the Present Danger was rooted in the debate over "the lessons of Vietnam." Nitze explains that with the decisive Tet Offensive in 1968 "two schools of thought began to emerge as to the proper future direction of our national security policy." Their major contention centered on the role of military force in the post-Vietnam era. One side argued that the economic costs of militarism outweighed its political return. The other maintained that military leverage in foreign policy, both strategic and conventional, would be of even greater importance following Vietnam. Nitze notes with considerable bitterness that an old friend and establishment colleague Paul Warnke went on to become a principal advocate of the former view, while he remained committed to military force. When Carter nominated Warnke for the twin posts of Arms Control and Disarmament director and chief of the SALT delegation, Nitze declared Warnke's ideas "asinine" and "screwball."

The Carter transition team drew its candidates for Arms Control executives from the Trilateral Commission for its senior level appointments and from the anti-Vietnam staffs of Senators McGovern, Church, Mondale, Kennedy and Udall to fill the second- and third-echelon positions. This was too much for Nitze, who complained that "every softliner I can think of is now part of the executive branch." Rostow added, "On Carter's appointments my views are unprintable!"

So Nitze and Rostow launched an effort to shape policy from without. During Carter's term a "Soviet threat" campaign led by the CPD created an alarmist climate in which situations of tension from Africa to Cuba and finally Afghanistan, came to be defined as extraordinary crises, a convenient perception that served to legitimate policies and doc-

trines that spelled the end of detente. Carter was captured by this campaign and finally emerged as its advocate. By his last year in office, he had come full circle—from the advocacy of global interdependence Trilateral-style to the leadership of a doctrine of global confrontation bearing his name and portending of confrontation.

The Carter Doctrine was widely proclaimed as the end of "the post-Vietnam syndrome." In essence, it marked a return to NSC-68, the Cold War manifesto that served as the cornerstone of U.S. foreign policy until its defeat in Vietnam. NSC-68 evolved from a secret policy review chaired by Nitze at President Truman's request in 1950. Its central notion was that the buildup of superior military force and the threat of its use in situations of crisis was the ultimate calculus of foreign policy. The Nitze-inspired effort called for a tripling of the military budget, which was presented to the public as needed to protect "the free world" from Soviet aggression and to frustrate "the Kremlin's design" for world domination. NSC-68's plans were quickly realized, despite opposition from the fiscally-conservative Republican right.

Carter's interpretation of the Russian invasion of Afghanistan as part of a pattern of global conquest rather than the rear-guard response of an insecure regime, symbolized the defeat of those, like Vance, presumably suffering from "post-Vietnam syndrome." The re-legitimation of NSC-68 was completed in the State of the Union address where Carter announced that the territories bordering Afghanistan were within the American sphere of influence, and that military force would be employed if U.S. "vital interests" were threatened. This Containment Militarism was further expressed in a recent *New York Times* story reporting that Reagan's national security advisers believe that "no area of the world is beyond the scope of American interest" and that the U.S. must be prepared "to cope with any level of violence" in defense of those interests.

Ever on the offensive, the Committee praised Carter for his hardline stance but insisted that the President's budget proposals "did not reflect the urgency of the present crisis or the magnitude of the U.S. commitments which he advocated." As NSC-68 had emphasized in a classified paper a quarter century before: "Without superior aggregate military strength, in being and readily mobilizable, a policy of 'containment'—which is in effect a policy of calculated and gradual coercion—is no more than a policy of bluff."

To accomplish its goals would require bringing personnel into the administration who would not flinch at putting the Carter Doctrine into practice, the CPD argued. Their ideological ally, Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.), wrote, detente-oriented appointees should be replaced with "people whose past judgments comport to the administration's new pol-

icies." And, Moynihan implied, Carter could expect the support of Democratic cold warriors only if he conducted a swift and thorough housecleaning—Brzezinski excepted. Accordingly, a summit was set at the White House between Carter and the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM), whose membership is synonymous with the Democratic side of the CPD. The meeting, which some hoped would bring a rapprochement between Carter and the neo-conservative wing of the party, ended instead in exasperation.

The CPD-CDM powerbrokers came out of the meeting without any guarantee that their recommendations would be transformed into policy in a second Carter administration. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Reagan's new ambassador to the UN, lamented that the meeting threw "cold water on whatever hopes we had that Iran and Afghanistan would have a broad effect on the president's foreign policy orientation." It wasn't long before this life-long Democrat and high-ranking member of the CPD joined her Republican counterparts on the Committee. Kirkpatrick's views, like those of Reagan adviser Gen. Daniel O. Graham, are a revealing portent of what we might expect as the campaign's advisers and their friends move into State, Defense, and the National Security Council. On SALT, for instance,

U.S. had the ultimate edge because of our superiority at the strategic nuclear level. That edge has slipped away."

The consequence of failing to maintain military superiority is the central lesson to be learned from Vietnam, according to Rostow:

"This is the true moral of Vietnam, above and beyond a good many others about the failure to press for military victory. The deterioration of our nuclear advantage led to the erosion of our position, and profoundly affected the final stages of the conflict."

The road back to the lost Eden of military superiority in the post-Vietnam era carried with it prospects of a quantum leap in military technology and spending, not unlike the arms race set off in the wake of NSC-68. SALT stood in the way of such a buildup on two counts: First, the counterforce weaponry by which the hardliners hoped to regain the strategic edge would fall outside the bounds of even the most innocuous agreement. Second, the sanguine domestic climate that would follow a SALT II ratification would hardly be supportive of the vast sums such a course required. Thus behind the public charge that a Soviet threat made strategic arms limitation impossible, lurked the greater fear that the achievement of such a state was



Kirkpatrick told me: "I am willing to be just as generous as we possibly can be as long as that's consistent with *maintaining clear supremacy*."

Despite statements to the contrary, an agreement to limit arms is anathema to those around Reagan. The candidate, of course, directed his opposition to the specific Carter agreement, not to the principle of arms control. But this is no different from the modern office-seeker who pays homage to equality for women and minorities, all the while denouncing ERA and affirmative action.

SALT embodies two principles inimical to Containment—first, a common interest between East and West in a reasonably stable world order, and second, the institutionalization of strategic equivalency in military strength as the linchpin of that stability. Hardliners reject both counts as unrealistic responses to Russian intransigence. CPD argues that the Russians' inexorable global design makes common interest and equilibrium impossible and also that the Russians think it is possible to fight and win a nuclear war. Factoring military force out of international competition as tacitly agreed to in SALT is little more than a strategy of appeasement, the argument continues.

Upon closer examination, however, one sees that CPD-led opposition to SALT springs from a deeper source than distrust of the Soviets. The tenets that stand as a prelude to negotiation attack the very marrow of Containment Militarism, and thus stand in the way of the hardliners' vision of a return to the halcyon years of American expansionism. The world view of Paul Nitze, *et al.*, holds that global competition remains a zero-sum game in which the power of a nation-state either advances or retreats and equilibrium between adversaries is an illusion harbored by those beset by what CPD's Norman Podhoretz calls a "failure of nerve."

Nitze and company also stand fast on the principle that military force and the threat of its use remains the *sine qua non* of international politics. Nitze argues as follows:

"To have the advantage at the utmost level of violence helps at every lesser level. In the Korean war, the Berlin blockades and the Cuban missile crisis, the

in fact undesirable.

This is not the first time that a Committee on the Present Danger has played a decisive role in a time of interelite conflict. The original CPD, upon which the present Committee modeled itself, lobbied to gain support for NSC-68 from the time of the Great Debate (1950-51) until Eisenhower's victory in 1952. Similarly laden with figures from the foreign policy establishment of its own day, CPD-I also launched a mass campaign exhorting public support for a military buildup under the guise of an imminent Soviet threat. The first Committee also worked hard for Eisenhower's victory over the liberal Adlai Stevenson, recognizing that the doctrine they had helped bring about depended upon presidential will.

Inducted into key command posts within the Eisenhower cabinet, as many of today's crop are similarly destined in a Reagan administration, the original Committee ran up against a Republican orthodoxy convinced that a sustained military buildup would bankrupt the nation. As titular head of the GOP, Eisenhower found it politically impossible to embrace the Keynesian perversion outlined in NSC-68. As a result, the global reach of Containment Militarism did not fully flower until the Kennedy years.

The Reagan forces are confronted in 1980 by constraints not political in nature, but economic. Conservatives have long since given up the "old-time religion" when it comes to military matters, while the decimated ranks of the liberals are in too much shock to mount an effective opposition. On the other hand, the military buildup that Reagan has adopted as the cornerstone of his foreign policy cannot but lead to skyrocketing budget deficits and a worst-of-both-worlds mix of escalating inflation and higher taxes as the Reaganists strive to make up the yawning gap between revenues and spending. Perhaps these next four years will teach the most important Vietnam lesson of all, namely that neither Carter and his Trilateralists nor Reagan and his CPD brain trust can bring back the heady vision of empire proclaimed as American destiny at the end of World War II.

Jerry Sanders teaches sociology at the University of Hawaii at Hilo.



# British Labourite's aim is to transform global power

Part II

By David Moberg

WASHINGTON

*This week we conclude the interview with Stuart Holland, British Labour Party member of Parliament and a leading young economic thinker in the party's left wing.*

*As part of your plan for controlling multinational capital, you call for increasing the role of public enterprise, in part to fill in for where private capital refuses to go.*

It's more than that. It's to plan in a new sense. We feel that it is not planning that has failed in this crisis. It is not Keynes that has failed. It is Keynesian indirect planning—monetary, fiscal and exchange rate changes and supply incentives—within a capitalist framework. It's important to plan in specifying the ends for which we want to use resources in the economy—conventional ends that are not fulfilled, such as housing, health, education, transport, environment and jobs.

Technical progress promises up to 30 or 40 percent unemployment in the services and higher unemployment in industry through silicon chip technologies, photonics and direct voice transmission for the office, eliminating the operator even on word processing. These technologies mean a whole new age of process innovations as opposed to the product innovations before and after the first or second world wars that created entirely new labor-absorbing industries. We see no new major range of services or products in the private sector that will actually absorb the labor displaced by these new technologies.

To transform these new technologies into a boon rather than a bane, there has to be a planning mechanism to distribute the new productivity that they embody between firms and industries, industries and services, urban areas and regions, social groups and classes—in other words, a structural, social and spatial redistribution of new productivity. That means planning.

Planning will involve a central, strategic role of leverage over big business directly doing through public enterprise what is not done by the private sector and indirectly leveraging the private sector to do what it may not want to do. Planning also will involve a new process of social negotiation of this kind of change in society. How much new technology do we want, where and why and when and in what way?

We should have a major economic debate throughout society on what kind of society we want, how we want to use these resources, distributed in what way. That will mean a new debate on a different kind of bill of rights, moving the bill of rights beyond the civil issues to econ-

omic issues—the right to housing, the right to health care and education, the right to useful employment some of the time rather than useless employment most of the time.

Socialization of the supply and demand sides of the economy will have to be accompanied by redistribution of demand. In the short term, we should reflate demand with new cash flow into enterprise from the higher public spending associated with disinflation of prices through price controls on the leading firms, the effect of which would then feed through the sector. Secondly, we should restructure demand and spending toward social spending and social services. That doesn't conflict with the productive sector, because goods will be purchased by people employed in the services sector.

*What would a British Labour government do with the automobile industry if you came to power in the next year or so?* We are recommending relating planning on the supply side of the motor industry to a restructuring of demand for transport away from private vehicles toward public transport systems, linked with environmental planning to reduce urban congestion, giving streets back to the people.

An example, ironically, can be given from what has happened in part under the regime of Giscard d'Estaing and Georges Pompidou in France. In 10 years they've turned around the loss-making French Metro and Paris public transport system offering bad service and congested streets into a loss-making but highly efficient and highly useful public transport system. The losses directly registered in the operation of the Metro, bus and rail systems are offset by the savings in road construction. Wage pressure on enterprise in the urban area is reduced since the public has cheap, easy, efficient access to workplaces in the urban area.

We have already in Britain pioneered an advanced passenger train with an average speed of 150 miles per hour, using aerodynamic techniques on existing track so that the body swivels on the wheels. When the train goes into a tight bend the center of gravity shifts without the passengers realizing it. We feel we should move from this new generation of advanced passenger trains to advanced freight trains, which could travel over even intercontinental distances in the U.S. at twice to three times the average speed of large diesel trucks. It can only be done on a public basis, as were indeed the first railroads in the U.S.

*Would you keep British Leyland going?*

This would imply a transformation of the motor vehicle industry, not simply keeping British Leyland going. It will not be possible in 15 to 25 years to preserve every job we have in Britain in the motor industry or in other industries. What is important is that productivity gains

through introducing machinery bringing four-fold increases in output per worker, or even ten-fold increases, be actually distributed to working people as a whole. They will be working fewer hours in, we hope, more interesting jobs with more job mobility in the best sense so they can widen their experience or can change jobs for reasons of professional mobility, such as is now limited to a small elite in both our societies.

*One of the difficult problems facing would-be socialist governments in Europe is controlling the multinationals. Related to that is the world-wide distribution of capital. If we get social control of capital, how will that be shared throughout the world?*

At the moment multinational capital does not benefit the U.S. economy, contrary to the assumptions of many policymakers and the corporate lobby. The runaway industry effect, which has been criticized by American trade unions for over ten years, has meant lost jobs in America. It has also meant lost exports from America, partly because of deindustrialization here and partly because when these companies produce abroad they do not export from here: That undermines the dollar, which is one of the

security and a degree of relative autonomy for countries that would otherwise fall under Soviet or Chinese or anybody else's influence.

The issue can't be separated from militarism as a whole. Militarism and the new arms race is a policy that well fulfills the acronym MAD used by the military men themselves. It is a formula not for mutually assured deterrence but for mutually assured destruction. The best form of security is certainly European nuclear disarmament and nuclear-free zones in areas that are likely to be subject to conflict.

In development terms the less-developed countries need both trade and aid. It is time for monetarist politicians to start acting like monetarist bankers and lend to the less-developed world because they make money out of the lending. But it should be done with a different sense. If you want to sell machine tools from Toledo or Essen, the best way to do so is to extend low-interest credit and demand to less-developed countries rather than cut off their demand, impose deflation and spending cuts. One country's imports are another country's exports.

We allegedly have avoided beggar-my-neighbor protection, but some 30 percent of EEC [Common Market] trade, 40 percent of U.S. trade and 50 percent of Japanese trade is directly or indirectly state-managed and controlled. We have substituted instead a beggar-my-neighbor deflation worldwide, sanctioned by monetarism and legitimated by the International Monetary Fund, where so many countries have been forced to cut their domestic spending that they have contracted their imports and other countries' exports. It's a vicious spiral of slump and decline.

The Brandt report [prepared by a commission headed by German Social Democratic Party leader Willy Brandt] has

## Solving the problems of the British auto industry will require restructuring the transportation system.



reasons the dollar is weak in its trading position, rather than simply the rise of the mark and the yen.

It is a mistake to think that the multinational companies cannot be brought under control. The real achievement of the OPEC countries is to show that they can do precisely that. In terms of ownership of the land and productive assets, the determination of volume of production and price—the key aspects of economic power—OPEC has taken control. It is much harder in manufacturing production, which is more sophisticated and can more easily be divided worldwide, for an individual country to gain control.

It is important, however, for countries such as the U.S. and Britain to realize that if they do not want political tensions fed by militarism to threaten their domestic peace, then a greater degree of economic security has to be given to various sectors of the world. The best defense against Russian imperialism, real or imagined, but real in part, is the economic

rightly stressed the potential mutuality of interests in trade and aid programs between developed and less-developed countries. Yes, it would mean that they import more from us, and we should import more from them. Yes, it would mean in the short-term more jobs in the developed countries, but it would give them the wherewithal to create jobs in the less-developed countries if we are exporting to them intermediate technology and machine tools or the capacity to develop their own industrial production. The problems facing us are already beginning to hit the newly industrialized countries—technological unemployment, inner urban crisis, regional imbalance, job loss through multinationalization of capital. In terms of monetarism, militarism and multinational capital, we have joint interests in transforming the present power structures on a global scale in favor of programs for people and democratic use of resources through public intervention and social control.

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One of Joris Ivens' films, *How Yukong Moved the Mountains*, examined everyday life in China.

## FILM

# A lifetime of documentaries

**Joris Ivens: 50 Years of Filmmaking**

By Rosalind Delmar  
British Film Institute, distributed  
by New York Zoetrope, 31 E.  
12th, New York, NY 10003  
128 pp., \$8.25

By Gordon Quinn

Joris Ivens has been making documentary films about revolutionary struggles for 50 years. He has taught, worked with and influenced progressive filmmakers all over the world. Critics at the 1964 Mannheim Festival voted him one of the best documentary filmmakers of all time, second only to Robert Flaherty.

Yet he is relatively unknown in this country, one suspects because not only are his films political in subject, but also in their use. His films made in the Soviet Union, Spain, Indonesia, China, Cuba, Chile, Laos, Vietnam and other countries were a part of those countries' struggles. Rejecting false objectivity, they explained and rallied support. And so they have been heavily censored and banned.

He has been instrumental in the development of several documentary styles. Some of his best known films are the early *Rain* and *The Bridge* (1929), experimental; *Spanish Earth* (1937) and *The 400 Million* (1938), the narrated war film; *A Valparaiso* (1962), poetic; and his most recent with Marceline Lorian, *How Yukong Moved the Mountains* (1975), a 12-hour cinema verite examination of everyday life in China.

He has taught and collaborated with several generations of political filmmakers, notably in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, Chile and Vietnam. Patricio Guzman (*Battle of Chile*) was his student and cameraman in the early '60s when he taught in Chile. All the existing footage of the Chinese Communists at the Yenan base was made with a camera he gave them. (It is now exhibited at the Museum of the

Revolution in Peking.)

Now a new book, together with his autobiographical *The Camera and I*, can introduce us to his work and ideas. *Joris Ivens: 50 Years of Filmmaking* is a complete biofilmography (a listing of all his films with credits, descriptions; quotes from reviews and interviews; and descriptions of how his films were used). There is also a selection of the narration and transcripts from some of his most important films, several key articles and interviews with Ivens, and a complete bibliography of his writings and work about him.

Rosalind Delmar knows Ivens' work and has chosen her selections well. She gives us the material to understand better his political aesthetic, not only when it appears obvious—as when he deals with revolutionary struggles—but also when his subject is the relationship of people to nature.

The selections from interviews spanning 50 years enable us to see his early fascination with film as a medium of poetic expression and how his political development influenced his style. It is also the 50-year record of an "independent" documentary filmmaker who, like most, has to get his funding from governments (for Ivens both communist and capitalist), corporations, foundations and the rich. He has worked from a base of film societies, government film institutes, universities and independent collectives.

### Lessons.

The great range of styles and sponsors for his films carry important lessons for today's documentary filmmakers (of which at 82 Ivens is still one). Understanding why and how his films were made illuminates the problems, practical, theoretical and aesthetic, of—as Ivens puts it—"penetrating reality more deeply in order to discover in it the expressions of life: the living truth."

For Ivens there are many ways to get at this "living truth." He says, "A film like *The People and Their Guns* is a didactic film. *How Yukong Moved the Mountains* is quite different. In this film about China, Marceline Lorian and I withdraw completely. There is very little commentary, the images speak for themselves and the Chinese people speak with their own voice. The commentary adds very little in the way of depth."

In *Phillips Radio* (1931) (one of the first commercially-sponsored industrial documentaries), Ivens constructed, says Delmar, "a documentary *Modern*

*unite* wrote, "The film is an act of accusation against the present economic system. That is why we can remain indifferent to the advertising cause it serves (although not very effectively) and why we would hope for the film to be widely shown in public cinemas, and also in workers' cinemas where its message would be easily picked up." Ivens, commenting much later (1976) on the experience of having made a corporate-sponsored film, said, "I had been given a contract guaranteeing full autonomy. A few people, very few, get an opportunity like that, those sorts of working conditions, and they go

## Ivens' work spans generations of political filmmakers.



Ivens' films often use working-class themes.

*Times*." But he goes beyond Chaplin to show not only the oppression, but the promise of modern industry. While he shows the dehumanizing effects of the capitalist assembly line, he also shows workers who are literally blowing their lungs out because science has not yet found a way to replace the glass blowers needed to make huge neon arc bulbs.

Film critic and theater director Leon Moussinac in a contemporary review in the French Communist Party newspaper *L'Hum-*

under immediately. When you get a contract like that, and accept it, you're taking a risk.... If you make the film and make a good job of it, you have an easy path in front of you. This corrupt side of cinema pursues you everywhere.

"For the younger generation of filmmakers I think the choice to be made is harder than it was for us, in our day. Perhaps it was easier for us because the dividing lines were clearer. Over there were the capitalists, and over here were we, the communists,

In *Indonesia Calling* (1946), Ivens met a similar challenge. The film resulted from Ivens' appointment by the Dutch government in exile as film commissioner for the Dutch East Indies in 1944. When the Dutch refused to grant Indonesia its promised independence after the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, Ivens resigned. He then made a film about the strike of the Indonesian dock workers in Australia in support of Indonesian independence. The film was smuggled into Indonesia, and both there and in Australia, the new Indonesian government used it. The Dutch government's response was to cancel Ivens' passport, and his full citizenship was not restored until 1956.

### Changing styles.

Twenty years later in the making of *The People and Their Guns* (1969) we again see Ivens responding to a changing world. The film, shot in 1968 in the liberated areas of Laos by Ivens and Lorian, shows the life of the soldiers headquartered in caves and the peasants who support them.

When the filmmakers returned to Paris, they found a country changed by the events of May 1968. They decided to finish their film collectively with French militants. The influence of aesthetic questions raised in the May '68 revolt can be seen in the film.

The most striking example in the film is the very long scene of a very young Pathet Lao soldier trying to persuade an older peasant woman to support the revolution. Throughout the dialogue they rhythmically step on and off a teeter board that drives an agricultural implement. The scene does not resolve easily and requires us to concentrate on following the political struggle going on behind the everyday activities. The film's rigorous style was a result of the experiences of his intended audience, the masses of French workers and students who participated in the May '68 revolt.

*How Yukong Moved the Mountains* (China, 1975) is the perfect contrast to *The People and Their Guns*. The China film was made by Ivens and Lorian eight years later (when Ivens was 78) to reach a world-wide, general audience.

In the brilliant camerawork of Li Tse-Hsieng (who Ivens and Lorian introduced to a cinema verite style) one can see the human approach of this 12-part, 12-hour film. It never zooms in to make a political point—only to take a better look. The camera responds on an emotional level to a smile or a gesture, and we draw our conclusions from the experiences and the activities of the people in the film. One of the most stunning segments is "Rehearsing at the Peking Opera" (30 minutes). It is shown in this country without subtitles, and they are not needed. Almost the entire film is of a rehearsal. It is effortless to watch as we see the acts and tricks developed. We come away with an understanding of how performing artists feel about their work, and of the mass audience they reach.

Like the artists at the Peking Opera, Ivens has never lost sight of his audience. For 50 years his artistic development has been in response to the changing world around him.

Gordon Quinn of *Kartemquin Films* is an independent documentary filmmaker whose most recent film, *Taylor Chain*, was shown on PBS.



## ART &amp; ENTERTAINMENT



Bob Gumbert

## THE PLAYERS

## Theater troupes share politics, same roof

By Morris Edelson

The coming year offers great promise and a possibly mortal challenge to The Shared Season, the only political theater cooperative in the nation. The performing groups making up the organization include Modern Times Theater, The Labor Theater and the New York Street Theater Caravan, some 30 artists who share an office and performing space at St. Peter's, a massive 150-year-old church at 336 West

20th in New York. They perform in turns in the church's assembly hall, so that performances run continuously. They share office and staffing duties, and they maintain and preserve the church. "If the boiler breaks," said Denny Partridge of Modern Times, "we fix it."

Until Jan. 11, Partridge is directing *The Bread and Roses Play*, which has already become one of the company's most successful productions. In mid-January the play goes on the road and will be replaced at St. Peter's

by C.R. Portz's *Railroad Bill*, which will in its turn tour the Midwest and California. All the groups, four in the U.S. and Europe and derive substantial political and financial support from their road shows. A play is kept in repertory about six months.

Each of the theater groups has its own emphasis and, until three years ago, had developed separ-

a new voice in theater, and after their first American hit, *The Mother*, the Caravan established Equity scales and standards for the collective and started transforming many of its improvisational pieces into polished acts.

The Caravan won praise from the daily press for its production of a British murder mystery with a political message. *Bandits* and

sharks of capitalism.

The Labor Theater has perhaps the most clearly defined goal and audience of the three Shared Season members. "We aim to bring relevant theater to working people, whose lives we portray," said Nancy Langer. The Labor Theater seeks out union halls and groups of working people across the country.

Among the labor-related productions that have been performed by the group are Betty Craig's script about working women, *I Just Wanted Someone to Know*; a dramatization of the life of Jack London; *Nightshift*, a play about miners that featured actor Rip Torn in the lead; and last year's *Full Confessions*, which won OBIE awards for performance and playwriting. The next play will be *Railroad Bill*, the story of a turpentine worker from Alabama who became the legendary Jesse James, a production set against an 1890s background of blues and ragtime.

Craig said that her group has been greatly inspired by contact with Europe. "In England in 1978," she recalled, "we found it wonderful that theater was reaching all segments of the population. It was a powerful voice. And the theater groups there had organization and strength, even though there wasn't much money, to be a force in the national culture. We returned determined to become a similar force." Craig played a major role in pulling the three separate drama groups together into Shared Season.

"We had performed at St. Peter's," she said, "and we knew each other's work. One of our main problems had always been getting a facility to play—people usually came whenever we had a place long enough to publicize the show. So we negotiated with the church; it was sold; we negotiated with the new owners; and we each met and discussed the plan of sharing subscribers and space—it's been

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ate lists of subscribers and supporters. The oldest group, the Street Theater Caravan, directed by Marketta Kimbrell, began as a guerrilla theater troupe and established its first base in an old Coney Island shack. The collective's members subsisted on "pay" of \$5 a week. Kimbrell had become an actress at Lincoln Center, but was impatient with both elite culture and unprofessional helter-skelter street shows. She slowly instilled a professionalism into the troupe, which traveled to migrant-labor camps, mining sites, Indian reservations and the Appalachians to give performances. After their first European tour, where they were hailed as representatives of

Molly McGuire, a Kimbrell-written play about strikers' counter-violence in the coal country, was called "Powerful, moving, and staged within an inch of its life" by the *New York Times*.

The group is now preparing a production of its 1968 play, *Hard Times Blues*. The new production is an interpretation of the tale about the Bremen-town musicians, the lovable animals who escape from the farm. The main characters in this production, a black Southern donkey, a Puerto Rican dog, an Appalachian cat and a Native American goose, learn to sing for their living. They travel to a robber's den on the Potomac and duel, in their naive way, with the



good ever since. It isn't perfect—all of us demand a lot from our actors and staff, and all of us need more resources—but we learn from each other and influence each other in good directions. All of us want to change the world and become recognized for our art."

The Labor Theater has often found itself in the middle of a strike. Portz recalled that locked-out auto workers stopped a show in Detroit with applause, whistles and cheers when the cast broke into a song written locally: "Our father who art in Dearborn, Henry be thy name..." Another time, when the theater played a small house in Appalachia, people came up after the show and said, "Why didn't you tell us it was going to be fun? More people would have come."

### Modern Times Theater.

The youngest of the three groups is the Modern Times Theater, which began in 1977. The theater was founded by Deiny Partridge and writer/actor Steve Friedman, veterans of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and by Iggy Mercurio and Joan Rosenfeld, who had been in New York theater. The theater is currently enjoying the success of *The Bread and Roses Play*. (See Rachel Kranz' review, this issue.)

Partridge and Friedman insist that Modern Times and Shared Season are not 1960s hangovers. Friedman said, "Political theater has a great tradition, going all the way back to Greek anti-war plays and Roman comedies of slaves outwitting their masters. Sometimes political theater may be out of fashion with the media, but just now there is a growing, seasoned audience, and involved



artists who know what it costs to produce progressive political statements and, even more, political art."

Like the other groups, Modern Times is an Equity company. Partridge said, "We want to have a skilled group making statements about social realities. The plays have to be well-done, not just correct, in order to reach groups of people, not necessarily already on our side. The plays are going to make them take sides but they also have to bring them up. Maybe it's just that life in New York is such a grind, we simply have to provide good plays that help people get through their days."

As an example of the influence of one political theater group on another, Partridge pointed out that this was Modern Times' first venture into the realm of labor struggle. The La-

bor Theater, too, she pointed out, is developing a multi-racial emphasis in their next show.

Steve Friedman said, "The Shared Season was started by people who weren't achieving their aesthetic or political goals in other groups. They had seen, in the '60s, that political theater could reach a wide audience. But they had also seen what happened when no one worried about quality. On the campuses there were still kids in whiteface screaming about imperialism, but fewer people listened." Joining the Odets-Brecht-Blitzstein-Living Newspaper traditions of the '30s with the modern European theater has brought new life to Shared Season groups.

Just at the time when Modern Times is planning its first Southwest tour, the Labor Theater is booked for the industrial centers of the Midwest, and the Street

Theater Caravan is preparing a show for the Indian reservations of Arizona and New Mexico, the small trickle of federal and state grants that helped establish the Shared Season is being cut off. Can the Shared Season survive with 1,000 subscribers in New York and the tours?

The organizers think they can, but admit that 1981 is going to be a difficult time. "Actually," said Betty Craig, "we know how to deal with official disfavor better than we do with scraps-from-the-table tolerance. It's hard to define your political goals in an atmosphere of declining liberalism." Ann Glickman of the Caravan agreed, "We have been aware of a reactionary trend in the country. So there may be less money—it's back to barns and garages for shows, back to labor halls: we'll have to go from the

footlights to the frontlines again." Marketta Kimbrell said, "We'll do our art, no matter what. It will be art that makes people free to ask crucial questions, and makes them less susceptible to manipulation."

Partridge said that the Shared Season has become increasingly self-reliant. "With the audience support we have had with *The Bread and Roses Play*, I think the nation's only political theater cooperative is not only going to survive but to encourage similar arrangements in other cities. Chicago and San Francisco should be ready for drama cooperatives, and wherever we go, we are encouraging people to think about presenting progressive theater."

Morris Edelson produced theater in Madison, Wisc., and is now a freelance writer in Houston.



## THE PLAY

# Lawrence textile strike set to *Don Giovanni* score

By Rachel C. Kranz

American political theater often uses music to enliven its message and to reach its audience more directly than it can with speech alone. Sometimes the musical style might be called "Brechtian"—the character steps out of her role to sing, in ironic or poetic commentary on the action. Or the play might use the American musical comedy tradition, in which a song is sung "in character," to express the singer's "natural" emotions.

Modern Times Theater's *The Bread and Roses Play* has made an unusual third choice: it uses opera for its musical base. The play, "A Love Story with Music about the Great Lawrence Textile Strike of 1912," concerns Giovanni and Emilia Tessitore, an Italian immigrant couple working in the Lawrence textile mills at the time of the strike. Like many working-class Italians of that time, Giovanni and Emilia know their opera so well that Emilia can call her husband a "Don Giovanni," a philanderer, the Don Juan portrayed in the Mozart opera of the same name. Playwright Steve Friedman and composer Gene Glickman have based their delightful songs on the melodies from that opera.

The operatic form opens up exciting possibilities for political theater. It allows the characters to present themselves as social types, singing of social issues with a directness that might seem stilted or corny in musical comedy. Yet Giovanni, Emilia and the other characters use music to

reveal the emotions generated by their particular situations. The play's message of "bread and roses" is a double one: the strike is both a social struggle and a catalyst for the personal transformation of the strikers.

*The Bread and Roses Play* blends comedy, romance and political sophistication. The characters, some of the most likeable I've seen in political theater, are continually faced with difficult personal choices. Should Giovanni stick with his elitist but successful AFL craft union, or take his chances with the IWW, the first union successfully to organize immigrants, women and the unskilled? That Giovanni's wife cannot join his union and that Giovanni has fallen in love with the Jewish IWW organizer who boards with them only makes the choice more painful, raising another set of political issues. And when Giovanni laments his rejection by both wife and organizer, Aurora, a black Lawrence-born woman who finds rooms for the immigrants, introduces another contradiction. She reminds Giovanni that *she* can't even work in the mill, let alone choose between unions.

The play holds our interest by focusing on the personal stories of Giovanni, Emilia and Hannah, the organizer. Unfortunately, this emphasis occasionally leaves puzzling gaps in the larger story. How did the Lawrence workers decide to strike? How did the Jewish, Italian, Slavic, Franco-Belgian and American-born workers overcome their linguistic and political differences



Aurora (Jean Waters, r.) tries to interest Hannah, the IWW organizer (Joan Rosenfeld), in a room.

to create a movement that became a turning point in U.S. labor history? What was the IWW's role?

The play moves so quickly over the political events that the politicization of the main characters goes unexplored. The characters' political decisions don't seem unlikely; one simply wonders how they were made so quickly. Both the story and the performances are finally so engrossing, however, that one is willing to accept a few political leaps. *The Bread and Roses Play* is enormously successful at political theater's double duty: to amuse and instruct.

*The Bread and Roses Play* opens the fourth season of the Modern Times Theater, a New York-based company whose earlier productions include *The Last Day*, about the Rosenberg executions; *Homeland*, a comedy about South Africa; *Tell Me a Riddle*, an adaptation of the Tillie Olsen novella about Americanized immigrants; and *The Eight Million*, about a New York housing struggle based on the experiences of a tenants' union. The company performs at schools, settlement houses, union halls and theaters in its effort to reach working-class audiences.

Currently, Modern Times Theater is performing at a community church under an innovative arrangement known as Shared Season. The theater shares facilities at the church with two other political troupes, the Labor Theater and the New York Street Theater Caravan.

Rachel Kranz is a Boston writer.



# CWA

Continued from page 13

always been well-publicized, it has been the rare, and universally unsuccessful, practice of only a few craft unions. For a few years in the mid-'60s, Local 6 of the International Typographers Union won veto power over new automation at New York City newspapers. But the agreement only hurried the slide into bankruptcy of a number of already financially ailing papers and the elimination of typographers' jobs. "...A strong and effective union stance in some plants," writes sociologist Andrew Zimbalist, "resulted in failure for New York City typographers as a whole."

In contrast, most American unions have unhesitatingly ceded to management the right to develop and use technology as it sees fit—usually in exchange for generous productivity wage gains, job security provisions, and buy-out clauses. The classic example is the "mechanization and modernization" agreements of the International Longshoremen's Union in the 1960s. In effect, longshoremen gave up their considerable control over working conditions for a \$25 million fund providing for early retirement, no lay-offs and a guaranteed minimum work week. But the plan only protected the most senior workers at the expense of the rest. And like most American union technology agreements, it came "after the fact" when any attempt to influence the actual direction of change was too late.

The new wave of computer-based innovation has inspired some criticism of the defensive practices of the past. Some unionists have begun to call for a more offensive labor strategy, one that would confront the implications of new technology before it becomes a *fait accompli* on the shop floor. For the present, however, the call for "worker control" of technology does not so much provide a solution as define an immense problem: The gap between ideas and practical blueprints for union action is extremely wide.

The Communications Workers' union provides a striking example of the dilemmas surrounding the technology issue. Like most unions, the CWA has historically supported management-directed technological change as long as the fruits of increased productivity have been shared with its members. When new technology displaced workers—as it has over 100,000 operators since World War II—the union has negotiated a variety of programs to cushion the blow: attrition plans, transfers, termination payments. This primary emphasis on job security has continued into the present.

But the widespread effects of computerization have elicited a call from within the union for "reshaping and rethinking" its response to technological change. Union leaders, often under the pressure of the rank-and-file, have begun to perceive the connections between technology issues and deteriorating working conditions like over-supervision and job pressures. There is much talk about "worker participation," "quality of work life," a shortened work week, and more extensive training programs. "Those kinds of things can't be solved in the traditional union sense," says Patsy Fryman, an assistant to CWA president Glenn Watts. "We ought to be willing to experiment, to try some innovative things." The most recent Bell System contract is full of first steps in this direction—six-months advance notice of all technological changes, a joint management-labor technology committee to examine the implications of new technology, an industry-wide quality of work life committee, and, most important, a special joint committee to establish the criteria for a comprehensive redefinition of industry job categories.

## Comparable worth.

One central feature of the new direction in union thinking is the idea of "comparable worth." It is an attempt to redefine the standards by which wages are set. "Technology potentially simplifies jobs," reads the pre-negotiation resolu-

tion of the CWA Bell System Bargaining Council. "Yet at the very same time, it complicates and adds greater responsibilities to some employees' positions." According to comparable worth, workers should be paid not so much for the skills they possess as for the responsibility their jobs entail. The clerical employee who operates a computer that does the job a skilled craftsman used to do may not have the skills or training of the craftsman; nevertheless, he or she has inherited the responsibility. Likewise the worker who uses new technology to do the same amount of work as three workers did before. In both cases, the job is worth more to the company and the wages of the workers should reflect that increase in worth.

Comparable worth can prevent the use of technology to downgrade jobs. Under a wage system based on comparable worth, skills may become obsolete, jobs may even disappear, but the wages of the workers who remain behind will reflect their corresponding increase in responsibility for operating technology-intensive equipment. In a modified version of this principle, the union won a wage raise in the last contract for the clerical workers who operate the new MLT computer system. Designed to "get the people off the payroll," MLT has caused major reductions in the skilled category of test-desk technician. But the new contract gives the MLT operator a wage rate that is 80 percent of the test-desk technician's pay.

But even this type of contract provision does not move very far beyond the constraints of traditional defensive protectionism. While it may protect workers' wages, it is incapable of addressing the more intractable problems of the deterioration of skill and the expansion of management control over work. For this reason, Harley Shaiken describes the CWA technology policy as "essentially, to manage an orderly retreat."

Some CWA members have also criticized what one worker calls the union's "band-aid approach" to technology issues. "The bottom line for the union is pay and a job," says Dave Newman. "That's changing. That has to change." Newman and a small group of New York Telephone employees publish an independent newsletter for telephone workers called *The Bell Wringer*. They have urged a more aggressive stance that would protect the job responsibilities of the skilled crafts. "It should be a basic trade union principle," writes Newman in *The Bell Wringer*, "that no matter how the technology of a job changes, the job title and pay rate remain the same (if not get better!).... The introduction of new technology cannot be stopped, but it does not have to lead to boring, routinized, less-skilled and low-paying jobs."

But the difficulty of protecting skill can be seen in the case of the MLT computer system, the most important struggle to date over new technology in telecommunications and one that the union lost. First introduced in 1976, the MLT system automatically runs tests on certain telephone equipment—tests previously performed by the highly skilled test-desk technician. Management assigned the operation of MLT to a clerical category in order to reduce the labor costs of equipment maintenance. In New York City, CWA Local 1101 disputed this assignment through the industry's grievance procedure.

The union argued that the computer is a tool, just like any other. MLT might be faster and more efficient but it is essentially no different from the meters used by the test-desk technician in his work. Therefore, to assign to a clerk a job traditionally done by a skilled worker was to violate the integrity of industrial occupational categories.

The arbitrator disagreed. Siding with the company, he found that computerization transfers the skill from the worker to the machine. While the output of the two jobs is "generally similar," there is "no basic skill parity." Moreover, even if what the union claimed were true, said the arbitrator, the union contract gave management an "absolute right" to assign work to whomever it chose.

The lesson of the MLT case is that to confront the problem of skill, a union must go far beyond protecting tradition-

al occupational categories. Even if the test-desk technician had won the right to operate the MLT (or even if the new MLT operator won 100 percent parity with the test-desk technician's pay, which amounts to the same thing), the problem of deskilling remains. For the idea of protecting workers' skills to have any meaning, it must include the demand for workers' access to new skills. But before unions will be able to do this, they will have to take a giant step: to challenge directly traditional management prerogatives to exclusive control of both technology and the organization of work itself.

At this point, control of workplace technology becomes a political issue. New ideas, experiments in workers' participation, joint management-labor committees will be meaningless unless they are linked to the mobilization of a broad cross-section of workers, skilled and unskilled alike, around technology issues. Harley Shaiken has formulated the outlines of an agenda for such a political movement—explicit union rights concerning the alteration of skill and the organization of work (how computers are used to monitor workers, for example); effective union input in design of new technology; recognition of the "social costs" of technological change, and guarantees protecting workers from these costs; and effective procedures to police any labor-management agreement concerning technology issues. But in the absence of rank-and-file mobilization and participation, even the most comprehensive programs are bound to fall short.

There are some countries where such a movement for worker control of technology is being built. In Scandinavia, workers have won extensive rights through both collective bargaining and legislation that guarantees them a say in the design and implementation of new technology. In Norway, a new union position has been created in the workplace called the "data shop steward" who is responsible for analyzing all new systems from the workers' perspective and making sure they contain no features used to restrict workers' freedom and control.

One central feature of the Scandinavian experience has been the rapid expansion in recent years of innovative union education programs that bring pro-union computer technicians and local union members together to learn from each other about the dangers and the opportunities of the new technology. These ex-

periments make clear that any serious worker control of technology requires not only independent union expertise but also an informed, "technologically literate," and politically active workforce.

In the present context of American labor relations and with American unions on the political defensive, it is hard to imagine a major campaign of worker education and rank-and-file mobilization over technology issues taking place in the near future. But there is, perhaps, a historical parallel between the shift from craft production to mass production in the American automobile industry and what is happening in the telephone industry today. During that earlier period of massive technological change, new ways of organizing work were also used to fragment jobs and isolate workers. Traditional forms of worker resistance and traditional structures of trade unionism proved inadequate. At the same time, divisions among workers were worn down by the centralization of mass industry. And the large unskilled workforce of the assembly line—long considered incapable of organizing—began to cohere. Out of the new conditions came a new unity and new forms of political action—industrial unionism and the sit-down strike.

There are similar trends in telecommunications today. The same technology that fragments jobs and destroys skills brings workers from a wide variety of occupational categories together in a way they have not been before. Computerization is also creating whole new categories of workers who are defined as "management" and usually considered unsympathetic to unionism—computer programmers, sales personnel, middle level technicians—who will inevitably face problems and pressures similar to what unionized telephone workers are experiencing today. Most important of all, the computerized workplace, with its concentration of expensive and highly complex technology, is especially vulnerable to disruption by small numbers of centrally located individuals. With increased responsibility come new forms of leverage and potential power.

Of course, what form worker militancy in the Information Society will take—whether sit-down strikes in TSPS offices or worker occupations of Automatic Switching Control Centers—is impossible to predict. But the greatest failure of imagination would be to assume there will be none.

## CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

### NEW YORK, N.Y.

#### January 22

"Defending Abortion Rights, a forum with speakers Judy Hempfling of DSOC and Assemblyman Al Vann. 8:00 p.m. at San Art Gallery, 15 7th Ave., Brooklyn. For more information call: 488-3054. Sponsored by the Brooklyn Chapter of DSOC.

#### January 27

"The Making of the American Working Class, a course with Herbert Gutman. 8:00 p.m. at the School for Democratic Socialism, 125 W. 72nd St. Call 787-1691 for more information.

#### February 1

Eyewitness Report on Polish Workers Movement. Joel Geier of the International Socialists will speak on his recent trip to Poland. At the NY Marxist School, 151 W. 19th St., 7th fl., 7 p.m. Sponsors: International Socialists and Solidarity: A Socialist-Feminist Network. Donation: \$2.

#### February 6

"Tighten Your Belts, Bite the Bullet, a 48-minute film that presents the policies and personalities governing New York, and shows the impact of these policies on New York neighborhoods, will premier at 7:30 p.m. at Godoff Auditorium of District 1199 Headquarters, 310 W. 43rd St. A discussion will follow with Dr. Jonathan House, Adam Veneski and others intimately involved with New York's fiscal crisis. Tickets are \$4.00 in advance and \$5.00 at the door. For more information,

call: Jim Gaffney at 620-0877 or Jonathan Miller at 674-3375.

### WASHINGTON, D.C.

#### January 30

"Eyewitness Report on Poland, with Joel Geier, International Socialist, reporting on his recent trip to Poland and his discussions with Solidarity and KOR. 7:30 p.m. at Auditorium Building C, 2201 G Street, N.W. Sponsored by Washington DSOC, Marho, I.S. and Washington Area Socialist-Feminist Organization.

#### February 8-10

"Empowerment and Equity for Rural People, the 5th National Conference on Rural America, will bring together rural grassroots people around the nation to launch a major new rural action agenda. Registration: \$25.00 for members; \$50.00 for non-members. Contact: Joyce G. Horn, Rural America, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C. 20036. (202) 659-2800.

### PITTSBURGH, P.A.

#### January 30-February 1

"Building a Strategy for Survival will be the theme for Mobilization for Survival's 4th Annual National Conference. There will be workshops, speakers, free housing and childcare. Contact: MFS, 3601 Locust Walk, Philadelphia, PA 19104. (215) 386-4875 for more information.

### CHICAGO, I.L.

#### January 24

"Eyewitness Report on Poland, with Joel Geier discussing his recent trip to Poland. 7:30 p.m. at Resurrection Lutheran Church, 3309 N. Seminary. Sponsored by Changes Magazine, August 7 Network and Red Rose.



# Sayles

Continued from page 24

But they take chances. While *Raging Bull* is extremely well-made, it is uninteresting to me—the De Niro character (Jake La Motta) was real and familiar to me, but I don't find him interesting. Still, it's not commercial.

**What kind of resistance do you see in Hollywood to non-formula projects?**

I've written seven original scripts. I've been unable to sell them because they're not plot-oriented enough and because they're about subjects the studios don't want to get into.

One is about the Mattowan, W.Va., massacre. It took place during a coal strike before the UMW was strong enough to defend people. It was one of the few such clashes where the townspeople bumped off the detectives. Even the mayor and sheriff of the town were against the coal companies.

Studio people told me they had to wait for *Blue Collar* and *F.I.S.T.* to come out. Neither of them made any money and they were about unions, so that killed it.

Then *Norma Rae* came out and I tried to talk the script around again, and the studios said, "That wasn't really a union story; it was a romance."

**Do you find the studios object to political subject matter?**

It's more like this: only a few of the people who read scripts can really read and say, "This is a good story." What they can read is the bottom line. They can say, "This person wrote these things, made this amount of money, therefore we can sell this writer"—not "this script."

Usually a film gets made because a producer with a certain amount of power and imagination reads a bit of "material"—a newspaper article or a book—and finds a writer to do it. Producers like to think a project is their own idea. Their job is to generate projects, and they don't like to feel they just found something and are lucky to have it.

**What difficulties do you have working with studios?**

One of the difficulties of working with a studio is that the person you made the deal with may be gone by the time the first draft comes in.

Getting a movie through a studio is like getting a bill through Congress. Things get taken out or added that have nothing to do with the film.

It's amazing when something does get

made. None of those people knows what the audience wants. They know what the audience will stomach. Feature films are a crapshoot; they're all guesswork.

**How did you first get published?**

I came in through the slush pile. A magazine editor noticed a long short story I had submitted and told me either to make it into a novel or cut it up. I had just got laid off at the sausage factory, so I had time to write.

I wrote short stories while I was working full time, but I wasn't living with anybody at the time and didn't have kids. If you have any kind of personal life there isn't much time left over.

After *Union Dues* I've written for a living, although I haven't always written what I wanted to. During the editing of *Secaucus Seven* I had to rewrite two horror pictures—*Alligator* and *The Howling*—to get the movie out of the lab. And I was also directing a play I had written.

**Fiction writing seems increasingly to be a specialty of universities.**

Yes. I've read a lot of manuscripts about a college campus where the writer-in-residence is losing his wife and starting to sleep with his students. These novels also reflect academic writing and are full of allusions that I miss—I wasn't a literature major. Too often the allusion is

more important than the people.

**Do you prefer writing novels to screenplays?**

They're different mediums. With film you can get an emotional impact from a visual presentation; and with a novel you can develop a more complex theme.

**Do you see the concentration of the entertainment industry as a threat to your work?**

The business part of it is totally uninteresting to me, but it's necessary to learn it. Movies always existed as a commercial form. It's their ballgame—you're a visitor if you want to do anything but make money. If your project will also make money, then you're a welcome visitor.

Everyone is much more into deals in the media business. The same thing is true of books. There are still places to publish that are not as concerned with profit, but they also don't have the money to print the books. You can't get into the chains without 20,000 copies. *Union Dues* sold only 10,000 in hardcover.

It's still possible to do your own work. But if you're going to do a movie that won't make money you'd better keep the cost way down. And if you're publishing a book, unless you plug into one of the big companies you'll have to do a lot of hustling.

## CLASSIFIED

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# SCREEN

Interview

# TESTS

John Sayles discusses the difficulties of being an independent writer for the movie industry.

**J** By Pat Aufderheide

JOHN SAYLES IS A PROLIFIC YOUNG writer. He is equally adept at short stories (*The Anarchists Convention* includes a story that won the O. Henry Award in 1975), novels (*Union Dues*, 1978, was nominated for the National Book Award and the National Critics Circle Award) and films (*The Return of the Secaucus Seven*, reviewed in *In These Times*, Oct. 22, 1980).

While his work displays a populist empathy with its characters, he sharply delineates the social conditions that create and limit them.

His characters are rich in their diversity: fading '60s activists, striking mineworkers, truckers, meatpackers, actors—many drawn from his own experience. After graduating from a Schenectady, N.Y., public school in 1968 he took a psychology degree at Williams College and worked in a variety of manual jobs and as a stage actor.

Sayles also has worked in the most commercial of mass entertainment films—action features. In 1978 he began work for Roger Corman, rewriting *Piranha* and writing *The Lady in Red* (which he describes as a revisionist gangster picture) and *Battle Beyond the Stars*. He now has two projects in progress with major studios, and also has a TV writing credit: *A Perfect Match* (CBS).

This mainstream success fuels Sayles' ambitions to produce independent fiction and film projects. He continues to live with a group of friends in Hoboken, N.J., and to work his own projects into a two-coast production schedule.

Sayles talked to *In These Times* in December about his work as an independent writer in commercial entertainment media.

**Is *THE RETURN OF THE SECAUCUS SEVEN* an autobiographical film?**

It isn't, but it is about people I know. It's about a group of people I was living with and their friends. Because of their activism in the '60s they did not do what their parents or high school friends expected of them.

Many of my friends went through VISTA. In VISTA they faced the real world every day and learned not only about the limitations of the system but also the constraints people face. They learned, for instance, that the people who they were trying to free from corrupt politicians had worked to elect them.

Meeting those people was one of the things that got me into writing *Union Dues*. The late '60s and early '70s were like a huge war, a civil war. Only there weren't just two sides, there were several armed camps, none of them listening to the other. In *Union Dues* I was an invisible visitor to each camp.

**How did you get interested in labor history?** I grew up in Schenectady, where General Electric is based. Every five years GE would say, "You're taxing us too much, we'll have to move the plant," and everyone would panic. The whole town would have dried up. Then during summer vacations and college I worked at a union job in a sausage factory.

**SECAUCUS SEVEN was rare because of its likeable characters. Why do the "new directors"—who provide alternatives to formula films—offer such a bleak perspective?**

It's hard work. Studios won't let you spend much time on characters if they spend any money on it. The way I did *Secaucus Seven*, on a very low budget, I was able to spend some time with people.

I think a lot of people offer a bleak perspective because that's what they think realism is. With Schrader and Scorsese, it's also their background—Schrader is from a Calvinist background and Scorsese was raised a Catholic.

*Continued on page 23*